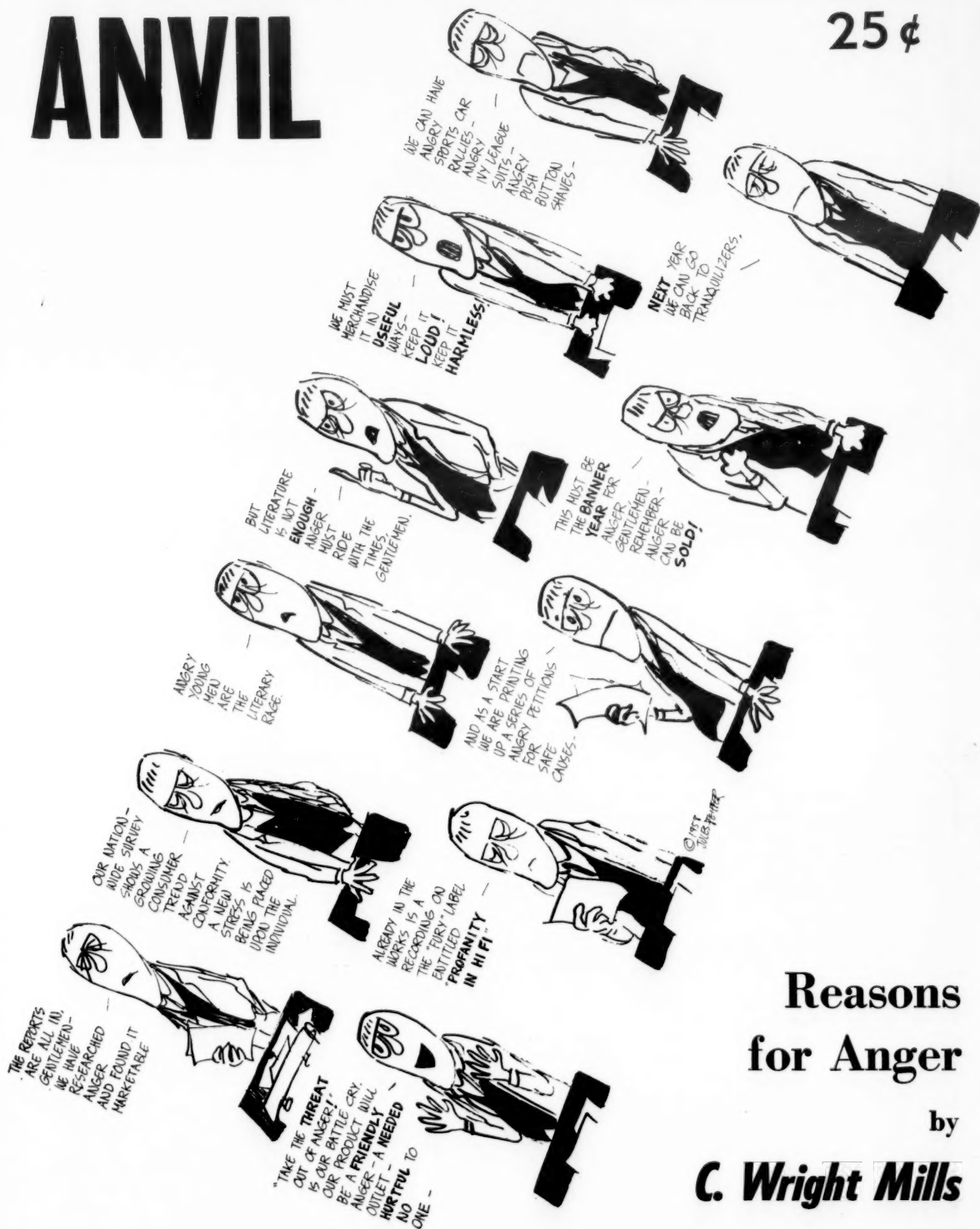


ANVIL

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Reasons for Anger

by

C. Wright Mills

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Politics in the Age of Sputnik <i>The Editors</i>	3
American Science <i>Oscar Fine</i>	7
Portrait of Stevenson <i>Sam Bottone</i>	11
The Complacent Young Men <i>C. Wright Mills</i>	13
Sick . . . Sick . . . Sick . . . <i>Jules Feiffer</i>	16
The Rebellious Intellectual <i>Mel Stack</i>	18
Mao's China: The New Illusion <i>Michael Harrington</i>	22
No Down Payment? <i>Bob Bone</i>	26
Books in Review	28
Confidential! <i>Jules Bernstein</i>	29
Communications	31

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Where Anvil Stands...

Anvil and Student Partisan wishes to express the ideas, criticisms and proposals of students who believe in democratic socialism. We address ourselves to those who seek the preservation and extension of democratic values to all forms of political and economic life. We firmly contend that this end must be pursued without deference to the status quo of private property interests, social inequality and human oppression which are characteristic of Western capitalism. At the same time, we are fully aware that totalitarian collectivism, which presently dominates much of the eastern world with its new exploitation and oppression, is the very antithesis of the democratic and equalitarian society which we seek.

We further believe that democracy and socialism are inseparable. Guarantees of democratic rights to all people, without any restrictions, in a society based upon private ownership of the basic means of production and human exploitation, are as impossible as achieving socialism in any society where democratic control is absent from nationalized productive facilities. Socialism cannot exist without democracy. Democracy can only flourish when all human needs are satisfied. Furthermore, a socialist society can only be attained through the conscious thoughtful efforts of a majority of the world's peoples. For this reason we see our task today as an educational and propagandistic one. We seek to encourage a socialist choice as a solution to the power struggle which holds the world in continuous fear and anxiety. This socialist choice must reject both the Western and Communist blocs, neither one of which offers hope of democracy, peace and security. Consequently, the socialist choice is a third choice which must embody and express the hopes and desires of the world's peoples in order to triumph.

Anvil and Student Partisan is open to those who desire to critically examine the socialist tradition and to reevaluate those aspects of it which are no longer applicable. But as our name implies, we claim no impartiality on the major social questions of our time, nor the forces behind them. We will defend colonial movements struggling for freedom from foreign domination and at the same time we will extend our hand to those behind the iron curtain who seek to overthrow their oppressive masters. We will seek to create sympathy for the aspirations of working class movements throughout the world. And we will support the struggles of the American labor movement for a larger share in that better life of which socialism is the final consummation.

Who's Who Amongst Our Contributors . . .

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98

Politics in the Sputnik Age

THE CRACKPOT REALISTS who direct American political life are engaged once again in a Great Debate over foreign policy in which the differences are relatively insignificant and imperceptible. Success in the competition for the title of Statesman is awarded to those willing to spend the most in the macabre auction of the military buildup, with such Democratic leaders as Lyndon Johnson and Dean Acheson struggling to outbid the Republican leaders and the recommendations of the Gaither and Rockefeller reports. This contest may be a source of political advancement for one political leader or another, but it leaves the people of the world wondering if there is any practical force which speaks for Man.

Make no mistake. American foreign policy is indeed bi-partisan. The leaders of both parties are obsessed with the conception of struggling with the Russians from positions of military strength. An overwhelming advantage in armed striking power is seen as the great deterrent to Russian aggression that will enable the United States to enforce its "solution" of the global crisis. The corollary of this conception is the creation of military alliances around the perimeter of the Russian empire—the pactomaniac obsession.

Both parts of this conception of American foreign policy have now, in fact, patently collapsed, and yet the Great Debate on foreign policy continues within its confines. The Russian firing of the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile and the successful orbiting of the two earth-satellites have given them the military advantage. It has demonstrated that their military technology is capable of leaping ahead even if the Americans again win the lead. The series of pacts built by the United States either have collapsed or are badly shaken: the South East Asia Treaty Organization is, for the most part, a paper alliance based on corrupt, reactionary puppet regimes like that in Thailand; the Baghdad pact is another huge delusion. The Eisenhower Middle East doctrine has met with defeat and rejection in even the most corrupt and backward regimes in the area.

And, the foundation of American foreign policy, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, has in recent months been crumbling. As the NATO countries, other than the United States, have steadily reduced their military forces available to the NATO command, the basis of NATO's original military policy, the creation of a large army based on Germany to act as a protective shield against the Russians, has disappeared. British troops have been withdrawn in conjunction with the Tory Government's decision to concentrate all effort on nuclear arms; French troops have been almost totally removed from Europe to fight a futile imperialist war in Algeria; the Germans have refused to commit themselves to raising troops for NATO.

The collapse of NATO basically stems from the fact

that the European peoples no longer see the point to a major arms build-up based upon German rearmament as the deterrent to Russian advance. The Hungarian and Polish upheavals have demonstrated that Russia cannot expect large, loyal armies from the satellite countries—sections of the Russian army itself defected during the Hungarian Revolution. Russian arms in Eastern Europe are no longer directed primarily to the West—they are there to keep together the crumbling Communist empire.

The nature of atomic and intercontinental ballistic missile warfare has become all too obvious to the West European peoples. At the same time they are skeptical about the preferability of "limited warfare"—of the limited tactical nuclear weapon variety or even of the conventional type. From their point of view, an all-out war might be less disastrous, for that war might well pass over European soil, involving atomic and missile warfare between the heartland of Russia and the United States, whereas limited wars would be fought in Europe. From the European point of view, then, limited wars are all-out wars, and all-out wars are limited wars. All-out wars seem to mean that the United States and Russia will destroy each other, while limited wars seem to mean that both the U.S. and Russia will destroy Europe.

Policy in a Political Vacuum

It was within this context that the United States suffered a major defeat at the top-level NATO meeting in December, 1957. The United States brought forward two major ideas: one, a proposal to establish intermediate range missile bases in Western Europe; the other, a rejection by the NATO allies of any proposal for negotiation with the Russians. For dealing with problems of peace, the fear of nuclear war and the cold war, these proposals indicate how isolated Eisenhower and Dulles are from the feelings of the people of Europe, as though they had been living in an hermetically-sealed vacuum. Walter Lippman, a wiser conservative than the leaders of the present Republican administration, commented that the original American program for the NATO meeting was "such a crude miscalculation of European interests and of European feelings that it is no wonder the conference has shown such spectacular lack of confidence in American leadership."

The Russians had waged an all-out campaign against the American proposals in the weeks before the conference. Khrushchev had warned all of the European allies that missile launching bases would be considered a grave provocation and could lead to nuclear destruction, and Bulganin had sent a series of letters to each of the governments proposing a new round of East-West negotiations on all major issues. Among West Europeans, unwilling to have the next war fought on their territory and in their homes, the Russian campaign met with much

success. Shortly before the opening of the conference the New York Times reported that the Bulganin letter "has struck a responsive chord in West Germany. . . . The consensus was that the inflexible position of the Western governments was self-defeating and that guns and rockets were no substitute for political solutions of the East-West crisis."

Consequently, when the conference began, Chancellor Conrad Adenauer of West Germany, regarded as the foremost supporter of the U.S. position in Europe but under pressure from the German Social Democratic Party, took the lead in emphasizing the need to re-open the question of negotiations and in deemphasizing the agreement for missile bases. Left up in the air was a West German agreement to accept missile launching sites. Prime Minister Macmillan followed Adenauer's lead. These defections appeared to be turning into a rout, since the Norwegian and Danish prime ministers specifically refused to allow these missiles in their countries.

The Compromise

Adenauer led the way to compromise. In return for an agreement in principle to the idea of negotiations with the Russians, the communiqué issued by the conference agreed "in principle" on missile bases, although refusing to specify when and where these bases would be set up. Prior to the NATO meeting Dulles had characterized an agreement only "in principle" as virtually meaningless. Adenauer and Macmillan, however, had acted in the best tradition of European conservatism which at least since Bismarck has understood that the maintenance of conservative politics within the context of political democracy requires granting concessions to popular pressure.

The United States is still a year or more away from perfecting an effective middle-range missile. Negotiations, therefore, are by no means a deterrent to an arms race. Indeed, they become a precondition for continuing the arms race. The *Herald Tribune* on December 19 declared, "The demand for discussions is not defeatism. It is essentially a move to mark time until America's capacity for deeds—on missiles, on science and general research—can catch up with its generally recognized capacity for words . . ." Adenauer, as the same paper understood, "Beset as he is at home by millions fearful of accepting rocket bases . . . seeks to parley with the Soviets during the period while the NATO military experts are preparing the logical case and plan for basing rockets."

Moreover, it is now apparent that while the United States has agreed to explore the possibilities of negotiations, it is not committed to them. Secretary of State Dulles on January 16 indicated clearly that the United States wants a period of "careful preparations" and exploratory discussions between specialists below the foreign minister level before any attempt to inaugurate top-level negotiations is made. In short, nothing much is likely to happen, although some sort of ineffectual top-level meeting such as the 1955 Geneva summit conference might take place.

The Russians, it is clear, have been aware of this all along. It is highly unlikely that Russia is now prepared

to pull her troops out of East Germany and to permit free nationwide elections and the reunification of Germany, in freedom, the core to any European settlement. But the Russians were able to make an offer of almost this magnitude—an agreement upon a halt to the arms race pending disarmament negotiations, a zone free of atomic weapons in Central Europe, and the withdrawal of all troops—NATO and Russian—in Europe now stationed outside their borders. They were certain that the United States was unlikely to accept this proposal or put forth other, equally reasonable and appealing ones.

The American government, as the Russians know, is committed totally to the arms race as the basis of its foreign policies. James Reston in the New York Times put the matter succinctly: "Problem No. 1 (for the Eisenhower administration) is how to keep their promise to negotiate, made at the recent NATO meeting in Paris, without risking the possibility of stopping the arms race at a point highly favorable to the Soviet Union."

In short, the Russians have won the political victory they were seeking in making the proposals for negotiations. Once again the Russians have successfully taken the political initiative, once again they have out-bid the United States in the political arena. In the eyes of millions of people they have placed the responsibility for world peace onto the United States. They have said to the people of the world, "The United States causes the arms buildup. The United States keeps Germany divided. The United States is the threat to world peace."

Rethinking and Re-evaluation

There has been some thinking, restricted to isolated individuals who are generally part of the left-liberal world, about a basic reevaluation of those American policies which have provided political victories for the Russians. While this rethinking is still tentative and somewhat vague, it is in the right direction.

The left-liberal criticisms of the official line of American foreign policy take their lead from the proposals made by the former ambassador to Russia, George Kennan. In a series of lectures over the British Broadcasting System, Kennan has said that all American, British and Soviet troops must be withdrawn from Europe and that this withdrawal should be connected with German reunification, for the German problem still stands at the center of world tensions. Kennan believes that it is possible the Russians are willing to accept such a proposal.

James Wechsler and the New York Post have taken Kennan's thesis—minus its *realpolitik* base—and extended some of its implications. Wechsler has proposed the neutralization of Germany and the withdrawal of all NATO troops from the European continent, troops which no longer play any major tactical function, by a unilateral decision on the part of the United States and without any Russian agreement to remove her troops from Eastern Europe. In short, he has proposed calling Russia's bluff, placing the onus of the Russian occupation of Eastern Europe clearly on Russian shoulders, and thus beginning a democratic, political counter-offensive against the Russian totalitarian empire.

The NATO troops in German are no deterrent to the Russian army, which is able easily to leap-frog over such "obstacles." Kennan and the New York *Post* have called for the end of illusory Maginot Line policies. By so doing, they have called into question the entire basis of America's military foreign policy. Wechsler wrote:

To urge the neutralization of the major base of NATO's striking power in Europe is, of course, to question the very foundations of the NATO doctrine. The proposal is one that Western Statesmen and military leaders, victims of their own limited imaginations, seem determined to evade. They scurry from one crisis to another in desperate attempts to shore up an organization whose precepts are obsolete because they remain military when they should long ago have become political.

Wechsler has also brought into question the ritualistic American Far Eastern policy, its backing of Chiang Kai Shek who represents the corrupt past and who has no prospects. He has suggested that instead of putting twenty million dollars into air-raid shelters, the money could be used to irrigate the Sahara Desert and the entire Middle East and to put India, and, indeed, all of Asia on its feet.

These sentiments among left liberals must be extended and deepened, must indeed come to pervade the labor movement itself. The total emphasis on an hysterical arms race has a logic of its own tending in the direction of preventive, all-out nuclear warfare. No one but madmen want war, but the politics of the military buildup makes the dangerous drift towards war more and more threatening. Both the Gaither and Rockefeller foundation reports approach the problem of American foreign policy from a purely military point of view; neither indicates awareness of anything but military considerations. Both set a tone of urgency—if not downright panic; both call for the concentration of all effort on insuring U.S. leadership in military strength.

Logic of Militarism

Given the fact that the U.S. can no longer assume complete and unparalleled military superiority, the emphasis on military solutions threatens to swell into preventive war. A totally military approach leaves no other alternative, because logic, under this premise calls for the War five, because logic, under this premise calls for the War military strength.

And this is not only our conclusion. It has been broadly hinted at by some members of the Gaither committee. Drew Pearson in his column of December 17, 1957 reported that committee member Assistant Secretary of Defense Mansfield Sprague fought for this point of view: since the first attack in a nuclear war would be so massive "that if war appears inevitable some time in the future, it would be disastrous for us to wait until the Kremlin strikes the first blow."

But even more authoritative is the report by Arthur Krock in the New York *Times* of December 20, 1957 of a speech made to an Army committee by William C. Foster of the Olin-Mathieson Corporation, a leading member of the Gaither committee. Foster had stated that "we must attempt to get away from the strange dichotomy

with which we have traditionally viewed force, refusing to consider it except as a last resort." Krock interpreted this as implying a preventive war thesis and "by deduction to have been the most important recommendation to the President and the National Security Council."

We live in an age in which the bipartisan leaders of American capitalism have been caught in a *cul de sac* in which they can only follow out the blind logic of a mad policy. The only difference between the dominant forces in the two major parties is over the minor details of this program. A class, once more creative and bold than any other class in history, can react now only in a sterile, destructive and dangerously reactionary way! Men of good will become the leaders of the drive to global destruction and a return to barbarism! They are reminiscent of nothing so much as Gulliver among the Lilliputians, tied down in a massive web of throngs, unable to move.

New Alternatives

The time remaining to liberals and the labor movement to counteract this drift to war grows shorter and shorter. It is not enough to point the accusing finger at the bi-partisan failures or at Russian responsibility for the crisis. We need to be positive to meet the demands for peace; we need to develop a program which in reality does not lead to a greater military buildup, but, rather, looks for new political alternatives.

One such political alternative, negotiations between the United States and Russia, has been pushed into the forefront of discussion. Unfortunately, the strange paradox about this proposal is that, as we have pointed out above, negotiations to end the cold war are part of the process of continuing that struggle, with both sides dedicated *not* to reach agreement, and to use the failure in negotiations as political justification for a further arms buildup.

But let it be clearly understood! We are not against negotiations. However—unhappily—there is no ground at present to believe that either side wants or is able to negotiate away the thorny problems, from the armaments race to the status of Germany, that constitutes the Cold War. The Russian proposals, as we have suggested, are made under the belief that the United States will not accept them. (If anyone has illusions on this score, all one need do is to review the history of the Russian proposals since the end of World War II—their position has uncannily shifted from one moment to the next, always to give the appearance of "peace seekers" but always containing subterfuge clauses that would leave them one-up in the Cold War.) And, on the other side, the United States has agreed to probe the possibilities of negotiations only in order to give the European conservative governments time to head off the opposition of their people to missile bases and the arms race.

Indeed, at present the United States is backing into negotiations under the greatest duress, for it has nothing with which to negotiate. A foreign policy based upon developing positions of strength *militarily* has left the United States at the moment with no cards to play other

than the further buildup of the insane arms race. The problem is at this point clear: a policy based on *military* positions of strength in reality disarms the United States, for it leaves it with no political positions of strength in a struggle which the Russians recognize to be political.

The time has come, therefore, for the United States to make a fresh start in foreign policy by developing political positions of strength. We know that many objections are raised to the call for a new beginning from those pessimists who draw an image of Russian totalitarian power as a super-human force ten thousand leagues high, capable of doing anything, anywhere, at any time. Their pessimism stems from their failure to see the clay feet of the monolith: the hostility of the people under its domination to its totalitarian rule.

A new American foreign policy must not start off from a *realpolitik* and cynical basis but from a democratic and progressive one. The United States must take the political offensive. Only by a series of dramatic and *unilateral* acts can the United States do this.

First, the United States must ban further testing of nuclear and atomic weapons, if possible in conjunction with a similar Russian agreement—without it if necessary. The level of nuclear stockpiles is such that there is very little danger to American security by such a step. The benefits would be immense.

Second, the United States must act to end the political division of Europe which has at its heart the division of Germany. This cannot be done by proposing a rearmed and reunified Germany inside of NATO. It can only be done by the willingness to exclude Germany from any military alliance and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from that divided land. This must be done unilaterally if, as seems certain, Russian agreement on it cannot be achieved. It would do more to free Europe than any other action for, as we have argued previously, U.S. troops in Europe serve less as a military force deterring a potential Russian attack than as a justification for the continued Russian occupation of Eastern Europe. Remove the threat from the West and the Russian arguments for remaining in Eastern Europe will be stripped down to the naked truth of Russian imperialism. Such a move would immeasurably strengthen the hands of all those forces in Eastern Europe who are groping for a way out of Russian imperialism and totalitarianism and toward genuine democratic socialism.

Thus, the United States must become the champion and supporter of the democratic and nationalist revolutions. It must demonstrate in deeds as well as words its full support to the Algerian Revolution, to the struggle of the Cypriots for self-determination, to the still rising peoples of colonial Africa, and to the peoples of Latin America trying to overthrow dictatorial regimes maintained in large measure with American help.

The United States must be willing to develop a program of massive economic and technological aid to develop the economies of these areas, for the most important single fact in all of world politics today is that there are only two ways for the backward countries to industrialize and thus march forward away from poverty and starvation: either through massive exploitation by a totalitarian regime which extracts the capital needed to industrialize from the backs of the people by a super-exploitation on a scale previously unknown in history or through massive aid from the already industrialized countries. The peoples of Asia and Africa will drift down the totalitarian road as China did if the aid from abroad is not given free of any strings. Peoples finally arrived at a level of national consciousness which has enabled them to overthrow the domination of Western capitalism are not about to invite it back in again—either by creating an atmosphere attractive for foreign capital or by becoming a military pawn in the hands of a foreign government. While today the Asian and African governments veer and tack, and make certain concessions to gain Western capital, in the long run it is clear that they will drift “the Chinese Way” if the only other choice available is to accept Western imperialist domination. The Indian people did not overthrow British imperialism to replace it with American imperialism.

A beginning has to be made somewhere and we believe that it has to be made along these lines. Such a program would have a near revolutionary effect on the course of world affairs. It would bring into motion the most dynamic, revolutionary forces throughout the world: in the Russian Empire, in the colonial and former colonial world, and in the West itself. It would capture the imagination of man and thus release energies needed to build the road to freedom, peace, economic justice, and security. The United States could do all this; and then, at last, someone would be speaking for Man!

February 1, 1958

THE EDITORS

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# Divided Soul for Whole Men

THE LAUNCHING of the Russian sputnik has posed the problem of science in the United States. On the one hand, government administrators have prepared massive programs to "revolutionize" the educational system in the direction of more science; while, on the other hand, intellectuals have taken up the defense of liberal arts against their traditional "enemy," the physical sciences and engineering. This posing of science versus the arts



constitutes a false dichotomy. For in fact the fate of science in our country is inextricably linked with the fate of the humanities, and above all, both long have been suffering from malnutrition.

For many reasons the non-scientist in America has a distorted notion of science, imagining it to be the vast accumulation of engineering technology that has given the "scientific" stamp to our gadget-worshipping "American Way of Life." While these applications make up the material contribution of science to society (and unfortunately more and more to the military needs thereof), they do not constitute the substance of science.

Science is the accumulation of ordered facts about the universe, and the scientist is interested in this knowledge for its own sake. Both the theoretician and the experimentalist must possess a highly developed and trained imagination—the hallmark of the liberal arts—in order to "connect" previously disparate and unrelated facts. They must become so involved with the known material that they can intuitively sense the proper direction for new inquiries and make intelligent guesses about where they are heading. This type of involvement is many levels above academicism and can only be reached through a driving passion for "truth." Thus the scientist must passionately *know*; even as Gallileo in the face of persecution, he must proclaim, "nevertheless, it moves!"

Above all, the scientific community is an international one. Today, as in the past, scientists the world over tend to concentrate their efforts on similar problems which are universally accepted as fundamental and pressing. Newton and Liebnitz invented the calculus simultaneous-

ly, although culturally England and Germany were a million miles apart. Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia could denounce the theory of relativity for philosophical or other reasons, but the German and Russian scientists had to use its results if they wanted to do any new work in atomic or nuclear physics. The phenomenon has been repeated time and time again.

Within this internationalism the rich and broad cultural tradition of western Europe nurtured modern science. Almost every important theoretical contribution has originated in western Europe or with men trained in its schools. While I can speak authoritatively only of physics and mathematics, I believe this is true of science in general. One only has to go down the roster of important names in physics—Einstein, Lorentz, Maxwell, Bohr, Dirac, Pauli, Heisenberg, Fermi. While it is true that a new group is beginning to emerge in the United States and Russia the outstanding people are still quite young and few in numbers. A scientific tradition in these countries is still in the process of creation.

It is important to remember that the kind of atmosphere which stimulates scientific creation is not built in a day. It is part of the cultural climate and heritage, and culture particularly depends on the arts. This cultural conditioning of science, combined with the international character of science, brings into relief the interrelatedness of the sciences and the liberal arts. How does the state of science in the United States and in Russia measure up against these considerations?

What the United States has excelled in is "knowhow," with its unique contribution of the assembly line and



other mass production techniques. The world has been forced to follow its lead in this, and Russia has done so most enthusiastically. In fact, in the United States, both in the popular imagination and in the actual scientific work, technique is almost equated with science.

But there is a wide distinction between an atmosphere that glorifies the *use* of science and one that encourages its creation. The United States *developed* the atomic



bomb through a massive technical onslaught; the Europeans, however, discovered and gave theoretical explanations for the fission of atoms. We have never achieved the kind of balance achieved by Germany, England, and France. In the cultural areas we are *backward*.

And if we are backward, the Russians are positively archaic; almost everything that hinders scientific thought in America is present in exaggerated form in Russia. That tremendous developmental programs are possible in America and Russia does not contradict this statement, for it is precisely to such programs that the cultures are geared. The emergence of important scientific discoveries and outstanding men should not be startling, for this was almost as true in Russia in the days of the Czar and in America before government contracts. Remember, for example, Mendeleeff and Pavlov, Benjamin Franklin and Willard Gibbs.

### **The Corporate Approach**

At the same time a profound shift has taken place in American science in recent years. As the assembly line mode of production has become increasingly predominant in industry, scientific work too, has required a massive approach. The giant drug concerns have developed enormous laboratory setups exploiting the trial and error technique, employing thousands of researchers to separate a few grains of wheat from the mountain of chaff with which they must deal. In physics, since the late '40's, the experimental work, particularly on fundamental particles, usually requires vast expensive equipment beyond the reach of the University, much less the individual. It has required the corporation and the government.

This shift to the corporate approach has undoubtedly produced results. Coupled with conditions in Europe during the rise of Hitler and in the aftermath of World War II, the promise of better laboratories has even led many of the European greats to emigrate to the new centers. As a random example of the results achieved by the new mass production method there is the electronic computer, which has provided the first non-academic jobs of magnitude for mathematicians in America.

It is precisely in these uniquely American areas of "scientific advances" that the Russians have caught up. The kind of financial support this scientific work demands can only be supplied by the biggest of corporations and, above all, by the government. While both here and in Russia the bulk of funds slated for "research" (ninety five per cent in Eisenhower's new budget) goes to development rather than to basic science, the Russian rulers are in a better position to mobilize their country's resources for this purpose.

The American Power Elite is responsive primarily to the needs of private property and accepts state intervention with the greatest of reluctance and misgivings, even when they feel the pressure of the cold war upon them. The Russian statists are liberated from such considerations and thus can throw a larger part of the national product into research. It is in the interests of both groups to encourage scientific research, particularly in the weap-

ons sphere, but the Russians have the advantage of more easily using the state as an instrument for organizing massive research.

No longer abandoned in their ivory towers, scientists are now regarded as a vital national resource. For this privilege—and added working facilities—a price is exacted. The over-all bureaucratization of American life stamps out a mold for them—even though the great bulk of scientists still cluster around the university at half the salary that industry offers them.

With the pressures that the industrial bureaucracy exerts, there is an unmistakable tendency to make over the scientist into the image of the Organization Man, reducing the number of "live" scientists in America, converting many into quasi-engineers. Indeed, those in science and engineering who are on the financial make soon get drawn into administration or sales, where high salaries and power are to be found. The few good men who enter industry do so with the clear understanding that they are prostituting themselves, that they will be lucky if ten per cent of their time can be spent on pet private ideas. The idea that managerial techniques of group dynamics will produce creative ideas could only come from people lost in a Kafkaesque maze.

### **Government and Campus**

The bureaucratization of American life reaches out to the campus, even to the realm of ivory tower research.

Almost all scientific research at the university "research center" is undertaken via contracts from the armed forces or the government and from private foundation grants. Of course, this does not mean that the work is dictated from Washington. But the financial relationship does lead to a bureaucratic apparatus through which the scientist must operate. While the government contract makes available enough money to hire most of the graduate students in physics and mathematics, providing a parallel to the usual half-time assistantships furnished by the universities, the more rarified the theoretical air of the subject, the less likely is a grant. Even more serious is the fact that much vital research time under these contracts is eaten up by the writing of nonsensical progress reports. (This, of course, is also true in industry, where the front office as well as the government has to be appeased.) Thus the dullest technical person today rapidly acquires the necessary skills in noncommittal doubletalk and governmentese. It is not the atmosphere for creative work.

The foundations might be expected to resist these pressures: at least to leave you alone in the library, the laboratory, in the field or at the desk; and even to encourage an oddball in the individual work of his own choosing. With rare and commendable exceptions, however, the foundations have failed miserably in this task, even though they are for it in principle.

What the incomparably greater bureaucratic pressures have done to hurt science in the Communist countries can only be imagined. A glimpse is obtained from an article written by the Yugoslav scientist Stephen Dedijer in the September, 1957, *Bulletin of the Atomic Sci-*

entists. Dedijer glorifies the democracy of the West as an essential ingredient for the growth of science and states in powerful terms that the Russian achievements came *in spite* of the totalitarian atmosphere, not because of it. Though their scientists may be paid on a level with high-ranking bureaucrats, though students may receive all sorts of privileges, nevertheless, in a society where the free flow of ideas is a State crime, the burden on the scientist, *where it counts*, is unimaginable. Even if Lysenkoism has been dropped and some theoretical controversy is now allowed in science, the very fact that this new freedom can be recalled at the whim of Khrushchev, and that what they say today may become a crime tomorrow, is more than enough to make a man tread lightly. In the United States an individualist may lose his job; in Russia he can get shot. And the fact that they aren't shooting the scientists, but rather encouraging them, is not sufficiently reassuring.

### "Impractical" Longhair

To return to America: in addition to the bureaucratic pressures from above, the scientists suffer from popular hostility, alienation, and suspicion from below. The scientist is seen in the popular image as an "impractical" longhair, an ineffectual intellectual who at the same time has the contradictory characteristic of a cold passion for his unimaginable work, a kind of antiseptic poet. But, as we have said before, the American public identifies "science" in the abstract with technology, and the *technician* receives approval.

Actually it is the engineer who is admired, and the admiration stems not the least from a myth of the "adventurer." It is the image of the oldest type of engineer, the Civil Engineer, the builder of bridges, skyscrapers, and huge tunnels. And more recently the image has been compounded with that of the gadgeteer, the "typically" American basement inventor.

While there is some truth—as there is in all stereotypes—in these images, their social strength stems from the fact that the engineer has been directly related to the processes of industrial capitalism. Remember, up to thirty years ago the engineer often managed a factory, even though today he has become a highly skilled worker. The engineering societies still have a distinctly pro-management and business viewpoint, even though the engineering unions have begun to organize. And as in so many other areas, it is this businessman status—combined with the adventuristic independence—that flavors the popular ideology. Thus we have respect for the engineer.

On the other hand, the impractical scientist finds that his work is usually regarded somewhat as Charles E. Wilson, the late Secretary of Defense, put it: "Basic Research is when you don't know what you're doing." And in addition to the historical alienation, a new source of popular hostility is to be found in the fear engendered by the H-bomb.

The hostility and resentment, growing out of a feeling of complete helplessness when confronted with the problem of *The Bomb*, is by no means limited to the "uneducated rabble." It has much to do with the picture

of the enemy that the supporters of the humanities have painted (particularly those of a moralistic cast). They have denounced the scientist for a lack of social responsibility, though as a matter of cold fact, the scientists have been more socially conscious and active than any other professional group in America, especially where the H-bomb issue is concerned.

### The Scientists Organize!

Though it is often forgotten today, the scientists were extremely active politically in the period following World War II. With an overpowering sense of guilt, the builders of the A-bomb formed The Federation of the Atomic Scientists. They published a magazine and carried through a campaign for international control of nuclear weapons and civilian control of the Atomic Energy Commission. With the decline of political life and the impact of the witchhunt in which security clearances were denied to anyone who failed to please a superior on some government-sponsored project, the flourishing chapters of the Federation ceased to thrive. To this day, however, they continue to publish the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, which is devoted wholly to social questions. And many of the nation's leading scientists retain membership in the organization, now called The Federation of American Scientists.

A significant number of scientists have refused to do any weapons work; a larger number are active in the campaign to stop the testing of H-bombs (over two thousand recently signed a petition to this effect); and there is enough political interest and understanding about the meaning of the crash H-bomb proposal to cause a significant group of the nation's top scientists to oppose the program.

As the most direct victims of the security program, they have been in the forefront of the fight against its "excesses." Above all, they have fought to declassify materials and to remove the smothering restrictions on knowledge that the "top secret" system has produced.

### The Responsible Irresponsible

These very concerns of social responsibility on the part of scientists have brought about recent attacks on them for being socially irresponsible. The most thorough attack on scientists in this area has come from Sidney Hook in an article in the *New Leader*, of January 6, 1958.

Hook begins by deploring the refusal of some scientists to devote their efforts to weapons research. The problem, as he sees it, is that the scientists do not have a political education, for if they understood the Soviet World Conspiracy, they would rush to do weapons work. Hook has even proposed to Eisenhower that he convoke and address a conference of the nation's top thousand scientists on this subject.

Some of the most influential groups of American scientists, in Hook's words, "insisted that the United States was as much at fault for this division of the world as the Soviet Union. . . . Their laudable desire for peace led them . . . to endorse a policy of *appeasement* toward the

Soviet Union." (my emphasis—OF) They are continually being deluded by the Russians into meeting with their official scientist delegations. At these meetings the Russian delegates present straight propaganda line resolutions and some Americans vote for them. Hook fears that such meetings can only lead to "a rape of the political virgins," and he would guard against this contingency by having the American scientists discuss "the defense of the free world among themselves, and not only among themselves but together with those of their colleagues who are informed students of political, social, and economic affairs." Let them but discuss these matters with "experts" like himself, and Hook has no doubt that all the scientists will go away convinced of *his* 100 per cent American line.

But the fact that nowhere is Hook able to cite more than the usual stale names of scientists who, like a few scholars, businessmen, and labor leaders, have been Communist fellow-travelers or innocent dupes, is sufficient indictment of his position.

There is, however, a further danger in this article and the type of thinking it manifests. The very logic of the argument is that the obvious way to stop this sub-

versive boycott by the scientists of weapons work is . . . to *order* the scientists to do weapons work. Perhaps Hook does not want to go this far; he talks of convincing them. But the logic is there, and thus the danger too.

The things that hinder American science—popular isolation, hostility, suspicion, lack of "free" funds, government controls, etc.—cannot be removed by any crash program, as the present Administration and so many others think. Make no mistake: the missiles will be turned out. But none of the proposed schemes are likely to accelerate the production of one new scientific theory. In fact, many of the proposals will increase the pressures that prevent new creation. The schools will force mathematics on youngsters who have never been stimulated to think and to whom reading alone presents a boring necessity. It will be another crusade; and even if it does mean a few more engineers attending and graduating from college, even if it means a few new scientists, the crash program leaves unsolved the basic problem, the hostile environment that stunts the growth of both the humanities and science.

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# Portrait of Adlai Stevenson

## — The Mirror of Liberalism

**A**DLAI STEVENSON SEEMS DESTINED for fame as a leading spokesman of his age. More than any other individual of the last decade he has captured the imagination of liberal Americans. They accept Stevenson as a polished and articulate symbol of their own mood. And yet, Chester Bowles has a more profound understanding of the revolutionary national upheavals in the colonial world; Estes Kefauver has greater personal courage as a maverik fighting the prejudices in his section of the country; Walter Reuther is blessed with broader social vision. But it is perhaps these qualities which make them less representative than Stevenson of the overall liberal mood. What, then, is the measure of this man?

Kenneth Davis in his laudatory biography of Stevenson\* states the key question concerning the broader social issues of our time:

The whole economic tendency of the age, spurred by every technical advance, seems to be toward an ever more inclusive collectivism. The great political question of our age, I am persuaded, is whether this collectivism is to be responsible or irresponsible in democratic terms—whether it is to enhance or deny the essential individual freedoms of speech, inquiry, and conscience.

Mr. Davis while evading a full comment on how he evaluates Stevenson's response to this great question, raises another related one: "In terms of this fundamental question, then, has Stevenson been an anachronism in American politics, engaged in the forlorn attempt to restore eighteenth century rationalism to the public life of an age which is far 'beyond' it?" Stevenson's frequent speeches extolling the benefits of free enterprise and capitalism demonstrate little of the requisite sense of history and indicate that an affirmative answer to Mr. Davis's question seems in order. But we must probe further.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Seymour Harris\*\* do not pose the problem with the same clarity as Davis. They see liberalism's central problem as: "What liberalism needs . . . is a new and compelling vision of the decent society to enable us to revalue our lives and redirect our energies." Exactly what this means is subject to a fairly wide range of opinion. This vagueness is often held up as one of the assets of liberalism—that it permits a wide range of divergence. But the defect is that no one can be certain of what is being proposed—if anything.

There can be little dispute that Stevenson, as Schlesinger and Harris point out "expressed the true liberal's commitment to the vindication of the individual in a massive society where mass production, mass education,

mass communication and mass manipulation are grinding man into a massive conformity." This he perhaps did better than other liberals, and this is the positive side of his political personality. But is this enough? How is this translated into political forms? What is his new and compelling vision of the decent society? Stevenson's limitation, and in this he shares the limitation of the main body of liberalism, is that all too often the broad principles in defense of individual rights float gently in air and never touch the reality of earth. And when they do, they come out second best as they meet the hard realities of corporate life and the cold war. Far too often the criticism of the bureaucratism of modern life comes close to the romanticism of the Brandeisian world of small scale economic competition.

There are liberals who have gone far in recognizing the social issues of our time, who "accept" the capitalist framework of the U.S. as a matter of practical politics, but who, under the impetus of a crisis, would be ready to move a long way toward the abandonment of the present framework of economic organization in order to preserve and make secure our more important democratic values. But there is great doubt whether this can be said in all fairness of Stevenson. Any fair appraisal, however, both of his actions and his words, has to assume the legitimacy and sincerity both of his actions and his words, has to assume the legitimacy and sincerity of his democratic professions.

### The Best of His Class

Stevenson's distinctiveness is not his limitations for they are less than those of most other leading public figures. Rather he represents the best of his class, their best instincts, their social consciousness and historical awareness at its finest. His limitations, such as they are, are those of his class. Consequently, his political activity, despite the great talent he brings to this calling, does not lead the way toward a solution of the great historical problems of our time. To achieve greatness means the ability to lead masses of people in the great social struggles of the time—to dam up the "inevitable" or to clear the way for a progressive resolution. Stevenson can do neither. Indeed, his eschewing of easy solutions, or almost any solutions, seems less an enjoiner against hasty and precipitous action than a sensitive and astute awareness of this futile resistance to overwhelming historical tides.

The particular characteristics of Stevenson as a liberal are not readily obvious. He embodies little of the indignation of social protest, and sense of injustice in the world. For example, Stevenson never associated himself with the labor movement, as Harry Truman did; rather the labor movement associated itself with Stevenson. But

\*Kenneth S. Davis, *A Prophet in His Own Country: The Triumphs and Defeats of Adlai Stevenson*. Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday and Co., 1957.

\*\*Adlai Stevenson, *The New America*. Edited by Seymour Harris, John B. Martin and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. N.Y., Harpers and Bros. 1957.

on the other hand, he is not a fat cow of insensibility. Stevenson comes from a background of more than modest means, but not great wealth. His grandfather, also Adlai E. Stevenson, was vice president in the second Cleveland administration, and Stevenson was raised in an atmosphere of politics, and civic responsibility. All his life has been spent among those close to the seat of political power and influence. But it was not connected to the great corporate wealth, and if anything there was an aristocratic disdain of the vulgarity, ostentation and narrow social outlook of the men of great wealth.

The duality of Stevenson is that he is aware of the narrow conservatism of the ruling elite, but yet at the same time he has been close to the seats of power and understands the responsibilities of power. His point of departure is that of a critic of the narrow and parochial outlook of the scions of wealth toward the problems of the administration of a modern industrial society.

### Responsible Conservatism

Stevenson's approach to the political issues of the day and his criticism of the Eisenhower administration is characterized more by objection to the way things are being done rather than what is being done. This difference stems from an administrative outlook—the Big Business government in Washington runs our affairs badly. But at the same time there is no hostility to Big Business in general or any slashing attacks against great corporate wealth. Stevenson's approach is more of an argument over the best way to administer the affairs of this corporate society. The men of great wealth—as typified by the Eisenhower administration—look at political and social issues from the point of view of a profit and loss statement. But Stevenson well knows that Big Government represented the interests of Big Business under the New Deal as well as under the present administration. He is opposed to a government dominated by the narrowness of their class outlook.

This is an outlook of intelligent and responsible conservatism. It understands that the governmental apparatus functions best when it is not functioning as the direct representative of corporate wealth. In fact it is this which defines their liberalism which looks to an independent body of administrators or bureaucrats to administer the affairs of state.

The idea of responsibility dominates this type of liberalism; responsibility in terms of being concerned with the longer range interests of this society and social system, and responsible in terms of the kind of criticism made of current Washington policies. This was exemplified during the 1956 campaign when Stevenson, although in disagreement with Eisenhower's Middle East policy, publically announced that he was refraining from public criticism (except on the eve of election) because he wished to do nothing which might weaken Eisenhower's hand in that situation. In abstract Stevenson will discuss the broad principles of policy, but when the real situation unfurls in all its complexities, Stevenson seems to be paralyzed by a Hamlet-like indecision. He is torn in his sense of responsibility: a responsibility toward the existing governmental policy or that of criticising what

he considers to be an incorrect policy. Time and time again Stevenson has chosen to be vague or silent when confronted with such a choice. And in this he has exhibited a greater irresponsibility, the responsibility of the crackpot realism which dominates American politics.

This is not merely an isolated example but flows from the fact that Stevenson is a conservative liberal or liberal conservative beneath the rhetoric of "talking sense." He has to be seen in his relationship to other forces inside the Democratic party. In the fight for the 1956 nomination the issues which separated Stevenson from the other main contenders—Averill Harriman and Estes Kefauver—was that he represented the unity of the Democratic Party—both for the Northern liberals and the Southern conservatives. This was symbolized by his statements in favor of "moderation" on the civil rights issues. The alternative to this adopted by the Harriman-Kefauver forces was to write off the South, as Truman had done in 1948 and run as the candidate of the liberal-labor wing of the Northern Democracy. Such a choice can not be explained on the ground of tactical considerations of how to win an election but as the outcome of a fundamental political outlook.

The distinctiveness of Stevenson is that he has been able to bridge the gap between the administrative liberal—primarily through his rhetoric, intelligence and articulation of an historical outlook—and the liberalism of social uplift and economic reform. In this he mirrored the liberal mood of the time. When Stevenson casts himself in a lincolnesque posture, it is in terms of Lincoln's failure to maintain the coalition of Southern conservatism and Northern liberalism. For this task he was eminently equipped, but whether it fitted the real interests of the American people and the American nation is another question.

SAM BOTTONE

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# The Complacent Young Men

## —Reasons for Anger

*We believe that the problems which Prof. Mills raises are of great importance, not only in regard to American youth, but to all politics in modern society. These problems need full investigation and full discussion and thus we invite contributions exploring their ramifications.—The Ed.*

IN GREAT BRITAIN and the United States there is much generalized anguish about there having been Causes in the thirties, but not anymore. A good deal of all this, I think, is less social pain than intellectual malarky. What it means is that in the Thirties the Causes were all set up and little moral or intellectual effort was required to get with them. At present, the social energy to develop such Causes is not accessible.

As a result of this there is the often complained of dreariness of the recent cultural scene and the obvious international fact of the political default of cultural workmen. This complaint and this default rest upon the unmet need: (1) to formulate private troubles out of the vague uneasiness of individuals; (2) to make public issues out of indifference and malaise; and (3) to pick up both the uneasiness and indifference—formulated as troubles and issues—in problems open to inquiry.

Private uneasiness and public indifference, intellectually speaking, rest upon an unawareness of both value and peril. We are consequently required to recognize imperiled values and to make a statement about what might be imperiling them. The unfulfilled promise of political thinking that is also culturally sensible stems from the failure to assert the values as well as the perils, and the relationship between them.

That is easy to say and is easy to do, if we've got the brains and the imagination. What is difficult about it is to keep doing it without falling into one or another of the old dead-ends of established slogans—left, right, and center—that lie about in such profusion. Thinking that is at once political and cultural nowadays requires the thinker to establish and re-establish his own little slogans, and with them continually to state troubles and values and the relations between them.

The young men of Great Britain represented by John Osborne's angry young man in *Look Back In Anger* have not yet begun to make explicit these troubles and values. They have not made plain—and I don't think they know—the reasons for their anger. What they have done, and with great skill, is to specify the mood of personal uneasiness and the quality of public indifference. They have done so mainly in the direction of private troubles. But even in that direction they have not succeeded in converting uneasiness into explicit troubles; I don't think they can without also translating the public malaise and indifference into political issues. And certainly they have not connected private troubles and

public images inside a line-up of their own problems.

Conservatives have often explained political radicalism in terms of personal frustration, but the point, I think, might now better be shifted about: personal radicalism ought to be imputed to political frustration. The frustrations which now cause a few young Britons to become angry, it seems to me, are basically political. But the young men have no political focus within which to express them, so their anger turns inward. Anger becomes a trouble of character, an embitterment of private milieux—not a shove toward the formulation of "good, brave causes."

That, it seems to me, is the key to the ambiguity of Jimmy Porter's character and the reason for the limited locale of his wonderful desperation. It is what makes his anger border on hysteria and it is the reason he can find no way out. *Look Back in Anger* is about the inchoate personal troubles that may occur when the political issues that lie behind them are left unformulated. The society by which this character is caged he believes to be in grievous decline, and since he is a passionately political man without any political role, he has taken the miseries of the decline upon himself and they are ruining his personal life. No more causes—and no more coziness. The next question would seem to be: which way will he look—personal coziness or "good, brave, causes?" But in this play there is no answer.

### No Burning Issues?

I do not mean that such writers are concerned merely with "personal relations" and ought to be concerned with great, "burning issues." I mean that just the kind of personal relations which do concern them cannot be understood unless they are recognized as closely connected with burning issues which are as yet not formulated. And because they do not recognize this there are no burning issues for the characters they invent.

Having no political focus for their grievances, they are possessed by too many reasons for anger. Their anger is blind in the simple sense that it has no suitable target. Jimmy Porter's main target, for example, is his wife, and although he plays about with the class distinctions between them, he knows she's not really fair game, and certainly not an adequate cause for his discontents. He has the feeling that what's wrong, what's phoney is "the whole damned thing," and so he is wildly abusive. So many targets—poverty, church, religion—in-general, decorum, the noisiness of women, homosexuals, in-laws



—and none of them connected, none of them set up politically inside a real idea of what is happening in the great society. He has nowhere to catch hold, his is a total anger which dominates him hysterically. There is desperation in this drama all right, but the cause and the meaning of this desperation have not been gotten into it. It is a truncated drama. It is a partial drama of not altogether understood symptom.

The alienation of personal from political life has been generally characteristic of most people in the formal democracies for a long time; now it is true as well of many people engaged in intellectual and cultural work. That divorce is the source of their creation, although I hope not of their creativity. If we suppose, for example, one difference in the situation of Jimmy Porter, Jimmy Porter as a character would no longer exist: a political movement which in its outlook and activities was alive to both the private troubles and the public issues in which he is involved. This obvious point I raise in order to make clear that what is intellectually deficient about the angry young men, the general cultural failure upon which their work rests, is a lack of the sociological imagination.

This lack is much more apparent in the work of Kingsley Amis than in that of John Osborne. Had Amis' *Lucky Jim* been written by some young instructor from Ohio, I doubt that it would have attracted much attention. It is another echo, a generation afterwards, of Sinclair Lewis's little set-to with provinciality and hypocrisy, with boredom and stupidity, against all-around pettiness, in which only the image of The Big City as the escape from it all.

### Symptoms of a Condition

Provinces are, even in England, provincial; sometimes the provinciality involves cultural pretense, and sometimes this pretense is mistakenly identified with all cultural work. I don't see much else in the character of Amis' *Lucky Jim*, James Dixon. He is a part written for one of those roles James Stewart used to play: you know, where he's a nicely clownish, bumbling and helpless male, altogether loveable by the masculine Jean Arthur. Add to that the grimaces of a TV-comic, and what else is there? His kind of yearning is merely one of the standard cultural accompaniments of urbanization—which at this date, and in Britain, does seem the mood of a curiously ambitious and curiously maladroit hick. Unlike Jimmy Porter, James Dixon is not in the middle of any big try. Presumably he just wants to get away from it all—to London, and if he can get the girl too, then he's got his happy ending. In the truncated but less unreal world of Jimmy Porter, no happy ending is in sight.

I think Mr. Amis is quite right when he declares that he is no angry young man. He is a young complacent. Although by no means twins, the two types are very much around just now, and both, I think, are symptoms of the same set of conditions. And that is the point: they are more symptoms of a condition than symbols of any political or cultural orientation.

On the surface they are symptoms of the divorce of

political reflection from cultural work, and of the default in the West generally of the classic political task of cultural workmen. But beneath that, and especially in Britain, they are symptoms of the collapse of the established pattern and of gentlemanly cultural aspiration, and also of such "proletarian" patterns and aspirations as have prevailed. They are symptoms of the rise to cultural articulation of the new middle classes and their white-collar worlds, and also of the inadequacy of these worlds as a point of new beginnings.

The cries of pain and the clownish grimaces are cultural expressions of the new white-collar formations. The Young Complacents are not only spokesmen for this class, they are quite successful members of it, or they are trying to be. The Angry Young Men are spokesmen for it too, but they are against the kind of situation it has placed them in, and they do not take as their own the aspirations it provides.

### White Collar Culture

As everyone must now know, this white-collar pyramid of technicians, managers, teachers, accountants, salesmen—discovered by Marxist revisionists in the decade before World War One—is the major change in the social and class structure of all industrial countries in the second quarter of the twentieth century. It is not only their enormous increase in numbers, along with the leveling off or decline of wage workers and of the old middle class of people of business and the free professions. It is that the ethos, the style of life, they embody also tends to become quite generally ascendent.\* The theme of the "provincial universities" and its use as a symbol, as well as the talk about "using culture in order to get one" and much else—all that must be understood in connection with the place of the expanded universities as the cradles of the white-collar worlds.

In the United States, this change in the social topography has not made the general cultural impact it has recently been making in Britain. For one thing, white-collar education is much more widely established in America; for another, in the United States there is such a clutter of styles and postures, aspirations and fashions. Omnivorous America can seemingly gobble up everything and celebrate it all. Any established pattern is harder to find—and certainly harder to disturb.

In Britain, however, there has been one ascendent pattern of aspiration, quite widely respected and certainly fully expressed in cultural activity and production: the model of the gentleman in his established order. This was the model which Max Weber, in an echo of German national liberalism before World War One, enviously held up against the "lacquered plebians" of Prussia who were not up to playing such a national role. And it is an order and a character that the United States has never known. America does not now have an Establishment—

\*For a statement of the cultural and political meanings of these strata, see *White Collar: The New Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); and further up the line, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

the overlap of authority and culture to form a semi-official realm of prestige which transforms power into authority, and makes of proper cultural work the authoritative point of national reference.

It is this political and cultural formation, of course, that some younger writers have rejected; that is why they are "vulgar." Theirs is a near total rejection, but it is a rejection that does not stand on any alternative social basis in which they can really believe. Certainly not "labor," despite the groping "to believe in it."

In a quite literal, although complicated sense, the fuss about Osborne, Amis, and their colleagues is a fuss about a class conflict. The clash is between white-collar culture and the culture of the established order; "labor" is culturally quite off to the side. That the young writers do not truly believe in any of these cultures is both the cause and the expression of their central confusion: the confusion of the very terms of human and of cultural success. It is this confusion that the angry young men and the young complacents of Great Britain represent and express. And it is this confusion, and the ambiguous conflict lying back of it, in which they seem to be parochially entrapped.

I am of course deliberately exaggerating the case, but isn't the line something like this. No upper class, no labor class, no middle class which makes them feel cozy and/or politically alive. Just now the higher circles are indeed presiding over the etcetera but with no real prospects; the labor party seems to be in the process of the self-liquidation of one of the last (non-Communist) socialist parties in the western world; the new middle classes are getting the hell out, to Canada, Australia—it would be more fun in America—or clawing and biting their way to the top of the old society. And the young complacents and the angry young men? In one sentence, are they not the internal emigrants of Great Britain?

I cannot help but think that all of this represents another instance, in the west, of the ascendancy of the international hayseed. There's a showdown on socialism, on its very meaning as well as on its chances, going on in Eastern Europe. But there is a more important showdown than that one. For those concerned with the politics of culture and the culture of politics, the problems now lie in the international encounter of those models of characters which are being formed and selected as ascendent models of the human being in the United States and in Russia. In both there is a showdown on all the modern expectations about what man can *want* to become.

In the American white-collar hierarchies and in the middle levels of the Soviet "intelligentsia"—in quite differing ways but with often frightening convergence—there is coming about the rise of the cheerful robot, of the technological idiot, of the crackpot realist. All these types embody a common ethos: rationality without reason. The fate of these types and this ethos, what is done about them and what they do—that is the real, even the ultimate, showdown on "socialism" in our time. For it is a showdown on what kinds of human beings and what kinds of culture are going to become the models of the

immediate future, the commanding models of human aspiration. And it is an epochal showdown, separating the contemporary from the modern age. To make that showdown clear, as it effects every region of the world and every intimate recess of the self, requires a union of political reflection and cultural sensibility of a sort not really known before. It is a union now scarcely available in the western cultural community. Perhaps the attempt to achieve it, and to use it well, is the showdown on human culture itself.

The withdrawal of cultural workmen from politics, in America as well as in Britain, is of course part of the international default, which is both cultural and political, of the western world today. In both countries, the young complacents and the angry young men are quite free. Nobody locks them up. Nobody has to. They are locking themselves up. The angry ones in the totality of their own parochial anger; the complacent ones in their own unimaginative ambitions. Isn't that among the main points our friends in Poland and Hungary and Yugoslavia ought to grasp about the United States and Great Britain in the middle of the twentieth century? And shouldn't the young men of Great Britain re-examine their reasons for anger?

C. WRIGHT MILLS



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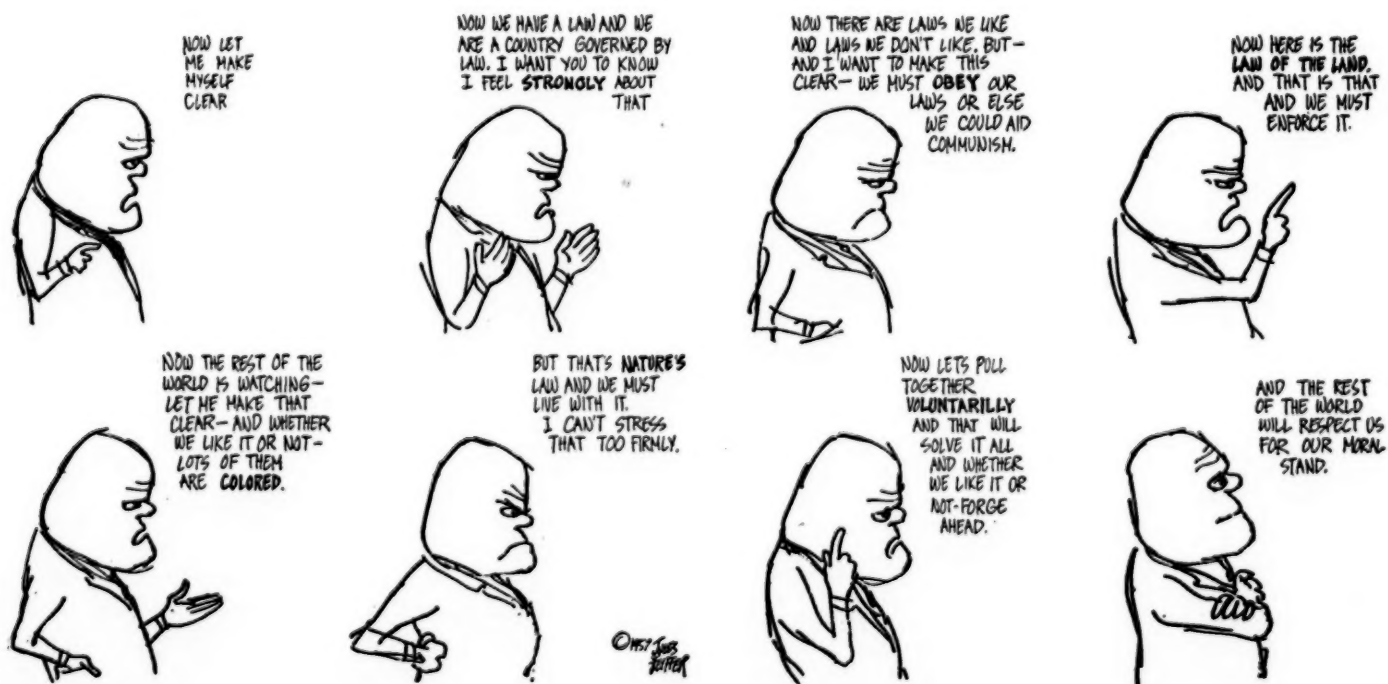
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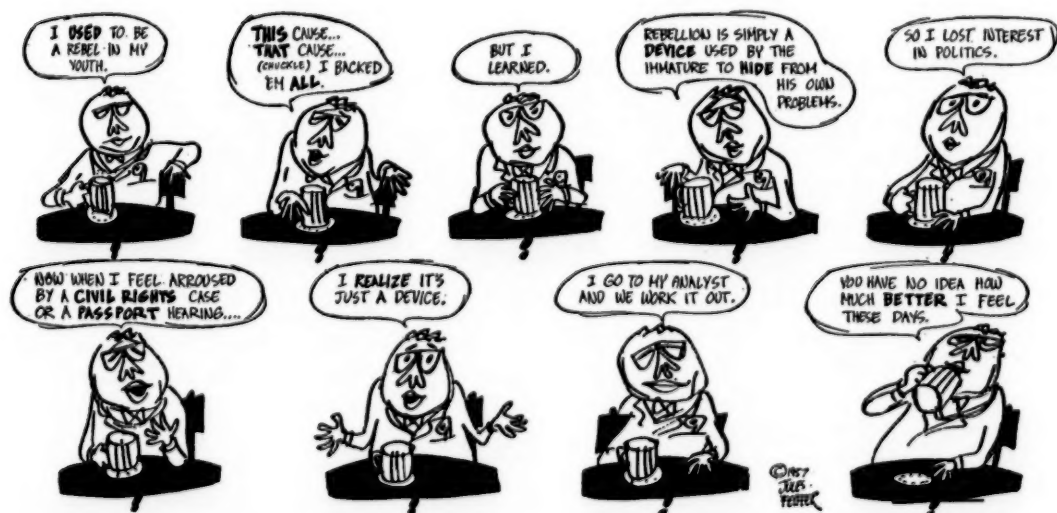
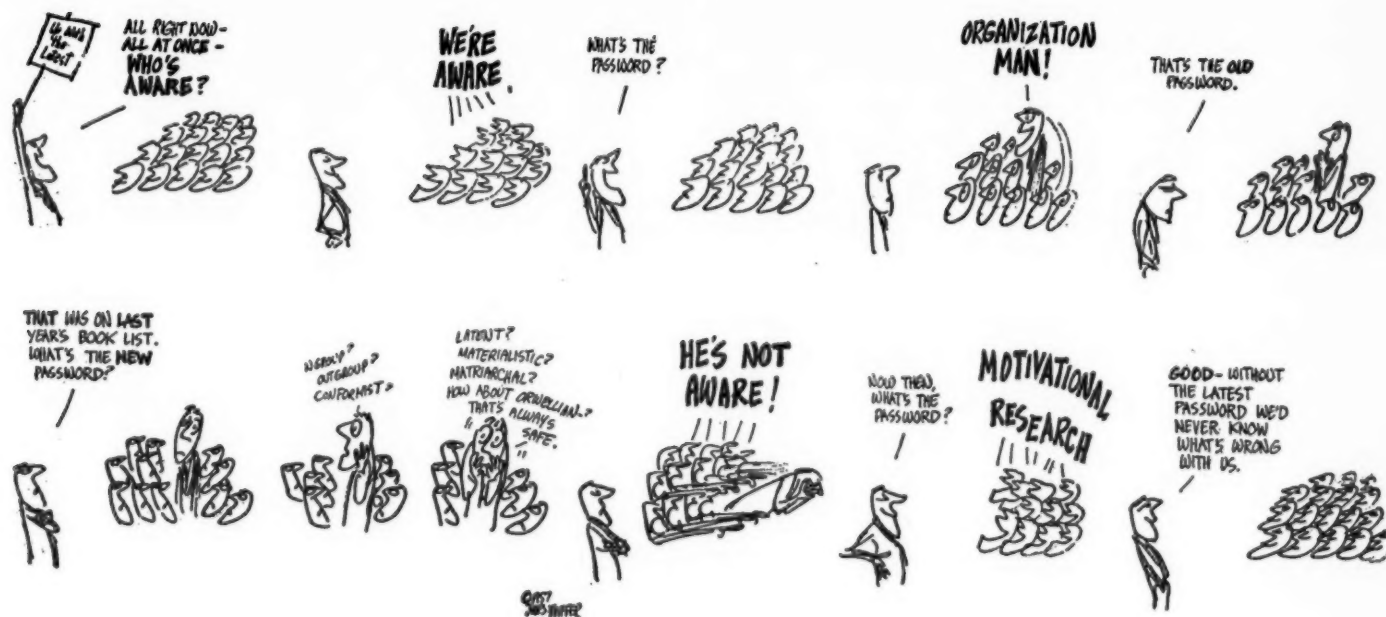
## POLITICS





# ..... by Jules Feiffer

## and CULTURE



# The Rebellious Intellectual

*Il n'y a plus d'idees generales . . . Baudelaire*  
*The faith of the "intellectuals" has turned sour.*  
**MacDonald**

ONE OF THE MORE OBVIOUS SIGNS of these quiescent times is the passivity of the intellectuals. And this passivity becomes even more salient when compared to the turbulence of the 1930's. As if to mark (or perhaps "mock" is the better word) this transformation, Dwight MacDonald publishes *The Memoirs of A Revolutionist*,<sup>1</sup> a volume of his selected essays written during the last 15 years. While MacDonald's name, unlike his more celebrated contemporaries, is known only to tiny radical groups and readers of the *New Yorker*, his "memoirs" aptly illustrate the fate of the rebellious intellectual. His political journey could stand for a generation of American intellectuals.\*

MacDonald became a socialist during the Thirties. At the time there were 25 million Americans suffering the effects of unemployment. There were pitched battles between workers and the police during the industrial union drives. With men selling apples on the street corners, no self-respecting, bright, sensitive, moral man could long remain on the staff of *Fortune* magazine. So MacDonald made the spectacular jump from Luce's publication to the Trotskyist movement.

For the next decade MacDonald remained a rebel—first a socialist, then a radical pacifist. His genius for political journalism flowered during these years, and yet, paradoxically, those years also account for his now leaving "politics to the politicians."

What impelled MacDonald toward radicalism was the vast misery of the American people during the depression. What drew him to socialism was the seeming imminence of the revolution. On both counts the commitment was based on a *mood*, and it could only be sustained as long as the socialist reconstruction of society appeared an immediate possibility, as long as the masses were in ferment and motion. Of course, MacDonald was not the only one to feel this way; almost all the intellectuals who turned to socialism in the Thirties, and then rejected it in the Forties and Fifties, related to socialism in a similar fashion. (In contradistinction to those who became Communists; their break was compounded by the realization of the crimes and totalitarian nature of Communism.)

MacDonald broke with socialism in the early Forties, but still remained a radical, a radical pacifist. The date is in itself highly significant. For it was approximately then

that the radicalism of the masses was passing away, to be replaced by war psychology and the ephemeral, but belly-filling, security of the Permanent War Economy. No longer was socialism just around the corner.

Yet the misery of the world continued, reaching even more tragic heights. The Second World War resulted in at least 54 million casualties and deaths—a statistic which indicates incalculable suffering to the sensitive intellectual. MacDonald's moral indignation remained at a fever pitch, and he launched into a muckraking exposé of the war the quality of which few journalists have ever attained.

Perhaps the best example of MacDonald's ability as a political journalist was his "The Responsibility of Peoples" (1944).<sup>2</sup>

This article deserves special attention on two counts. First on its own merits: "Responsibility of Peoples" is a definitive answer to the argument of "collective guilt." And it also indicates the type of question which agitated MacDonald, the mood which sustained his rebelliousness, the indignation with which he greeted all injustice.

During the Forties, American liberals, especially those who thought of Stalin's Russia as progressive, felt that the entire German people were responsible for the Nazi crimes—for the concentration camps and the mass exterminations. They were revolted by the Nazi thoroughness and, above all, by the fact that such horrors previously "done only by individual psychopathic killers has now been done by the rulers and servants of a great modern State."

Yet, MacDonald asks, why should the entire German people be blamed? The people who filled the concentration camps were Germans; the death camps (begun in 1942 and all located outside of Germany) remained a state secret unrevealed to the German people. And certainly if one were to maintain the theory of collective guilt, would not the American people be just as guilty for the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, without warning, when the war was practically over? MacDonald reminds us that the A-bombings killed some 90,000 men, women, and children. Further, the Americans really would be doubly guilty. They possessed the ballot and thus could have voted out of office the responsible officials, while in Hitlerland a concentration camp awaited the hero who merely spoke out against the crimes.

<sup>1</sup> *The Memoirs of A Revolutionist*, New York: Farrar, Strauss & Cudahy, Inc., 1957, \$4.75.

\* Cf. Sidney Hook, Edmund Wilson, Leslie Fiedler, William Barrett, Fredrick Dupee, Irving Kristol, Phillip Selznik, James Farrell, et. al.

<sup>2</sup> Most of "The Responsibility of Peoples" is reprinted in *The Memoirs of A Revolutionist*. The entire article can be found in D. MacDonald, *The Root Is Man*, Calif.: Cunningham Press, 1953.

Obviously, while someone must be blamed for these horrors, the argument for "collective responsibility" is logically specious. Germans *did* kill the Jews of Europe, but these were particular Germans, "specialists in torture and murder, whom it would be as erroneous to confuse with the general run of Germans as it would be to confuse the brutality-specialists of our own local police forces with the average run of Americans."

The logical fallacy of "collective guilt" still does not explain *why* the liberals accepted these notions in regard to the German people (especially when they would not even conceive of applying the same argument to the American bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki). While theorizing on such topics is extremely difficult to prove, MacDonald offers a number of related hypotheses which are closely attuned to the psychology of the liberal mind and, I think, strike at the root of why liberals accepted the theory of "collective guilt."

Notice the implications behind "collective responsibility." It means society is an organic whole: all parts are so interrelated that only the totality can act, and conversely, *no line can be drawn between the whole and the parts*. As MacDonald puts it:

... the hands that strangle are no more guilty than the belly which nourishes them; the specialized "Jew-killing experts" are no more guilty than the peasants who raise the food they eat or the metalworkers who forge their instruments.

The Organic Theory of Society allows an escape from dealing with the causes of Fascism. If *all* classes in Germany are equally responsible for Nazism, then it is not necessary to view Fascism as an outcome of the capitalist crisis; it is not necessary to blame the capitalist class which, in a desperate attempt to save the social order, sought refuge in barbaric Fascism. It is not necessary to distinguish between Nazis and other Germans—all are guilty, and thus no one is more guilty than anyone else.

## Lead and Gold

The methodology can be put to important use, and was after the war. It allows lead to be turned into gold. As MacDonald points out, just two years after the war ended, the German people were magically transformed into the heroic defenders of the Free World by the same ideologists who yesterday denounced them as fascist beasts. And, ironically, this included the high percentage of ex-Nazis who held positions in the new post-war regime.

There is one postscript to add to MacDonald's analysis. The liberals have shied away from the "collective responsibility" theory in the last few years, at least in opposing Russian totalitarianism (perhaps the only ones who today seriously maintain that the Russian people are responsible for Communism are the Communists). Still, the methodology has never been repudiated. Time can only tell if the cry of "collective guilt" will resound once again throughout America.

MacDonald's "The Responsibility of Peoples" marked the high point of his aroused indignation. After 1944 the flame flickered lower and lower, for radicalism, sustained only by a mood, is like a lit waxen candle. The

flame burns for a longer or shorter time, depending on how high the candle is or how deep the mood. But sooner or later it must go out.

In 1947 he was able to produce another fine political piece, *Henry Wallace—The Man and The Myth*, stripping the progressive covering from Wallace and revealing him in all his opportunist and *Realpolitik* nakedness.

But while the misery of the world's peoples continued—exploitation, totalitarianism, the danger of a Third World War which with its A-bombs threatened to annihilate all human life—the continuous crying out of "*This Must Stop!*" produced no results, and the candle finally burned out.

The first hint that MacDonald was traveling the well-worn path to Ex-Radicalism came early in the Forties. It was officially formulated in 1945 with the publication of "The Root Is Man" in *Politics*.

## Rejecting Socialism

"The Root Is Man" gives MacDonald's reasons for rejecting Marxian socialism and unsuccessfully attempts to outline a new course for radicalism.

Marxian socialism is shattered, as Daniel Bell would express it, by being *in* but not *of* this world. It suffers from a fatal ambiguity: a devotion to the classless commonwealth (ethical principles) and, at the same time, a reliance upon the bloody, impersonal historical process (practical politics). The reliance upon historical processes allowed the Stalinists to pose as legitimate socialists, while the ethical principles helped reduce the legitimate socialist groups to impotent sects.

Further, some of the Marxian concepts have become obsolete. Its language no longer can "ask for the things which are today really in the interests of the oppressed—and which will *not* be granted from above." Marxism clings to the theory of inevitability, MacDonald maintains, both in the sense of a unilinear development from capitalism to socialism and in the sense that collectivism necessarily means socialism. All these errors compound the original Marxian sin of ambiguity between ethics and practicality.

Finally, and above all, MacDonald is convinced that socialism has proven itself utopian. The socialist, wandering in the desert, falsely saw "The Mirage of The Proletarian Revolution," for "if the American working class were ever going to make a revolution, it would have done so . . . during the 1929-33 depression. Instead, it voted in Roosevelt. . . ." All the hopes of the Thirties were simply a product of this mirage: the trade union movement is actually moving in the opposite direction, away from socialism. The unions have "subsided from youthful rebellion into bureaucratic conservatism"; they have become "a bureaucratic mass-organization which simply extends the conventional patterns of society into the working class . . . a narrow minded economic pressure-group or . . . a prop to a disintegrating status quo."

Yet if you confront a socialist with all of MacDonald's arguments save the last (the question of the working class and utopianism), what happens if that socialist admits



their validity? The answer is . . . absolutely nothing need happen! Certainly a socialist can say "yes, our language needs modernizing; yes, we are caught in a difficult situation with our ethical ideals and the necessities of living in a capitalist world; yes, socialism is not inevitable,"—a socialist can admit all this, as many have done, and remain a socialist.

MacDonald's final argument—that the working class does not play the role assigned to it by socialists, that the rebellious industrial unions of the CIO have become conservative—deserves serious attention. It contains the essence of the intellectual's rejection of socialism.

In the Thirties the system was collapsing and the American working class—after more than a decade of conservatism when it could not break the bonds of the old craft-unionist AFL—shot forward and created the CIO. Then with the War Economy came full employment, and another decade of Cold War prosperity, both characterized by enormous Government intervention into the economy for the purpose of producing means of destruction. The union movement lost much of its élan, of its underdog psychology; the gains were consolidated, the plush international union buildings were constructed.

### **The Anti-Utopian**

At this point MacDonald, and the intellectuals like him, became disillusioned and "anti-utopian" through an extremely utopian process. The unions were not in furious motion (as if there were a dogma that social advance is perpetual in the working class), the huge struggles were not taking place, *therefore* the working class is not what we thought it. In short, by comparing the reality of the labor movement to a utopian image, MacDonald became, in his inevitable disappointment, an anti-utopian. Even today, however, a massive fact remains: that in the general moderation and conservatism of American politics, the labor movement is the left wing, committed to a program of liberal reform, fighting, if ineffectively within the Democratic Party, for low-cost housing, a national health program, and Civil Rights. Moreover, it is still obvious that the mass impetus for any significant social change in the future will be based on this same labor movement.

Thus, MacDonald's disillusionment is a product of his illusions, his too-easy cynicism is a function of his too-easy faith in the working class, the anti-utopianism was reached through utopian logic. The socialist really cannot deny the obvious truths about the conservatism of the labor movement today relative to the Thirties which MacDonald points out—only the socialist rejects the glib conclusions of the moody intellectual.

Perhaps the most telling indication of the transformation that was occurring in MacDonald's commitment to radicalism was the second half of "The Root Is Man." Here MacDonald attempted to find some theory on which to base radicalism, justly entitling the section, "Wanted: A New Concept of Political Action." In a footnote (added in 1953) he admits that "I didn't find it and I can't say I'm looking very hard for it. Too discouraging." At that time (1945) all he could find was that it

was necessary to "emphasize the emotions, the imagination, the moral feelings, the primacy of the individual human being." This was the basis for his radical pacifism—the reduction of politics to the level of the individual, which in turn served as his reason for opposing World War II (besides a tendency to think the war could only lead to the triumph of fascism, no matter which side would win). Pacifism could permit MacDonald to maintain his deeply felt anti-war sentiment; it could not cope with the difficult political situation after the war ended. As MacDonald had divorced his pacifism from all social forces, the cold war became impossible to analyze, to act in, even to educate in. No longer could an individualistic philosophy, of whatever kind, meet the problems and needs of the world. So it is not surprising that by 1953 MacDonald would say, "Too discouraging."

Although MacDonald did not find a new political theory on which to base his radicalism, his political prejudices shifted slowly as the years went by. By an outright negation of his own individualism, he used a social argument in shifting to a pro-Western, pro-capitalist point of view. He saw no hope of the people taking their destiny into their own hands. (Especially not under Stalinism, which MacDonald viewed, through the eyes of Hannah Arendt, as a solidified, monolithic super-state that, by terror, had totally broken all resistance and atomized all social groups. And this view of the nature of Stalinist totalitarianism interacted with MacDonald's mood—the one supporting and strengthening the other—until it finally appeared almost ludicrous for anyone to say the people are capable of taking their destiny into their own hands. It was, as MacDonald would say, Marxist baby-talk. What MacDonald believes today, after Hungary totally shattered this myth, is an interesting question. Unfortunately, he has yet to speak.)

### **And Damming the Dike**

The reason MacDonald gave for choosing the West was the vast difference between totalitarian Communism and Democratic Western capitalism, between the two *social systems*. Obviously a peculiar argument for a man attempting to rid his thought of social categories. Yet, slowly and painfully he made his new choice. In 1948 he supported the West in terms of the Berlin air-lift and then dropped the question. In 1953 he supported the West in the Korean War. And in 1957, like the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dike, MacDonald was calling for a new conservatism in the tradition of Burke and Tocqueville to preserve our fast vanishing freedoms. It is too bad that a finger in the dike cannot stop a tidal wave. MacDonald undoubtedly knows this, for he creates the impression in these statements—usually contained in a subordinate clause and never more than one sentence long—that he has not, will not, become serious about such stuff. He is no longer interested enough.

MacDonald's withdrawal has a sort of nostalgic, pathetic sadness. Clearly one must sympathize with this statement:

. . . my own personal life is too absorbing—this being both a cause and effect of my diminished interest in

politics. . . . The young man feeling he has "all the time in the world," plans his house on a noble scale and starts to build it of the best Utopian materials. But the middle-aged man, his house still far from finished, just wants to get a tarpaper roof on before winter sets in.

Only the story isn't finished with this seemingly final statement. MacDonald is still interested in politics—only it is *politics past*. As one writer has put it: "He finds it simultaneously fascinating and other-worldly, intellectual but insanely abstract, and in the doing he proves that he has not lost his own deft sense of irony." And I might add, that while he has lost none of his wit or biting insights into the sectarian mentality, the excessive concern with struggles long dead displays a disheartening morbidity. Three examples show these other dimensions:

[When he became a Trotskyist:] I talked about "protofascism" and predicted that, as the class war hotted up, the Luce papers would drop the "proto." I was wrong—extrapolation is a dangerous toy for a Marxist, like giving a Sten gun to a baby.

The N. Y. Times was to us what Aristotle was to the Medieval scholastics—a revered authority, even though Pagan, and a mine of useful information about the actual world.

[On the little radical sects:] The evolution of the Weisbordites was typical, if a bit extreme. . . . The "ites" dropped off one by one until the Revolutionary League of America or whatever it was called—the title generally made up in scope for any restriction of numbers—consisted of the leader and his wife. Then there was a divorce, and the advance-guard of the revolution was concentrated, like a bouillon cube, in the small person of Albert Weisbord, who sat for years at his second-hand desk behind the dusty glass door proudly emblazoned REVOLUTIONARY LEAGUE OF AMERICA—HEADQUARTERS writing his party organ and cranking it out on the mimeograph. . . . Weisbord is now a trade-union official. *Sic transit*. . . .

To return to the present. With all his individual peculiarities, MacDonald still symbolizes his generation of radical intellectuals now turned Ex-Radicals. But not only in the relation of mood to politics. In a deeper sense, they have all retained the humanistic impulse that originally brought them to the socialist movement. They have become confused, disorganized, pessimistic, downhearted, worn-out; they have gone back to their own particular intellectual fields and the comforts of family life; but all retain a secret corner in their hearts for the "old days" and "the movement." While in Europe the very same type of intellectual remained a socialist—like Orwell or Silone—in America they all became Ex-Radicals (one indication of the difference a socialistic labor movement can make). Probably most will stay Ex-Radicals, even though a revived socialist movement would be a tremendous attraction to them.

At the same time, it would grossly oversimplify mat-

ters to leave the implication that the intellectual's commitment to socialism is solely a reflection of the state of the labor movement. This may be true in the most sweeping sense, but the relationship is of such a complex nature that its statement is little more than an abstraction. Concretely the limits of independence are large enough for the intellectual to make his independent choice. In the final analysis, the intellectual *can* swim against the stream, can remain a socialist, even in 1957.

And, instead of expressing a sour faith, is it not far better for the disillusioned intellectual to agree with the Doino of Manes Sperber's *The Burned Bramble*:

All the same, even if it's true that man, that anguished and yet magical animal, cannot be transformed or that only slightly; even if it's true that all those who, in the past, have attempted such a transformation had as good reason to believe in their ultimate success as we have to believe in ours; even if it's true that from time immemorial succeeding generations have made the same mistakes over and over and over again, each generation believing that it must risk its life for an imminent and entirely new world, and believing, too, that it has opportunities denied to its predecessors—*eh bien*, even if that's all true, still everything good that has been done in this world has been done in this attempt to achieve the unachievable. It follows that the finest use which a man can make of his life is to live as though preparing himself for an unrealizable state in which what is of dignity in him will find permanence and—who knows?—grandeur.

In a world always threatened by the possibility of a Third World War to top off all the other, older evils, is it too much to ask for Doino's approach?

But, then again, Doino was an East-European. . . .

MEL STACK

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# MAO'S CHINA: *The New Illusion*

**T**HREE YEARS AFTER HE DIED, Joseph Stalin was buried politically by the one who had become his heir. The veil of lies and distortions about the Russian social system was ripped away by Khrushchev in his struggle to replace Stalin. In turn, the imperialist attack on Hungary in October of 1956 dispelled the illusions about Stalin's successors.

For some the revelations of Khrushchev and the Hungarian Revolution shattered all faith in the Russian social system. Others tried to maintain that during three decades of systematic terror in Russia the automation of nationalized property went on building "socialism," even though the product was a denial of every humanistic, egalitarian, and democratic ideal.

And some reacted by replacing the shattered memory of Stalin with the living image of Mao. Russia, they said, was not what they had thought it, but China was indeed the manifestation of their hope. They pointed to many differences between the two leaders and the two societies; their affirmation was more refined, less gross, than the adulation which had been given to Stalin. On the surface, one is tempted to feel that this new faith is another example of the mystic cry, "The King is dead! Long live the King!" But that explanation is too easy. The feeling about China has deep social roots.

For one thing, Chinese Communism is deeply identified with a tremendous historic event: the colonial revolution. Mao's regime was not imposed upon China by the force of Russian arms. It came to power through a mass movement and, as far as the word had any meaning under Chiang, it was freely chosen by millions upon millions of people. For another, Chinese Communism acts. The inevitable comparison to the rule of the Kuomintang cannot be avoided. Before Mao's conquest, there was a stagnant, plundered nation at the mercy of foreign imperialism and domestic corruption. Now there is movement, change, there are statistics about new steel mills and the spread of education and literacy. These are facts, and it is upon them that those who believe in Chinese Communism rest their faith.

Yet the facts are not so simple, they do not end the argument. Granted that Mao came to power on the wave of a popular movement. What does that prove about his regime? Does it demonstrate that the Chinese Communists today represent the will of the majority of the Chinese people? The answer, of course, is no.

Russia's Revolution of October, 1917, was also a tremendous explosion of the democratic power of the people, but we now know irrefutably that Stalin expropriated that popular movement, that he crushed it unmercifully.

The production statistics are rising, to be sure, but

Hitler solved unemployment in Germany, Mussolini made the trains run on time, and Stalin built a huge industrial power. In each case what is decisive is not the simple brute fact that change has taken place; it is the question of "what kind of change?"

The China which Mao took over was a country which was much more backward than the Russia of October, 1917. The over-all production was slightly less than that of Russia at the time of the Revolution, but per-capita output was only twenty-five per cent of the Russian level. The enormity of this fact must be grasped. It means that Mao's program of industrialization had to take place in a situation where capital was incredibly scarce, where the possible roads of change were at once limited. If capital is not readily available in a country as a result of past production (as it is in America today), it can be accumulated in one of two ways: through aid from an advanced country; or through a terrible exploitation of the manpower of the nation.

## **Facts and Reality**

Mao, with his far-reaching program of industrialization, received no substantial free aid from Russia. As the Peking *People's Daily* put it on February 7, 1954:

In the case of the one hundred and forty-one huge projects . . . which the Soviet Union has helped us to construct or renovate, the equipment for these factories and mines was all obtained through trade by exporting our agricultural, native, special and mineral products.

Once it was clear that no outside aid was forthcoming, and the policy of heavy industrialization was insisted upon, there was no other way of changing Chinese society than by intensively exploiting the mass of the people. In this context change inevitably meant misery for the vast millions, a new life and new opportunities for the few who imposed it.

Once this fundamental fact about Communist China is understood, all the figures about growth of heavy industry can be seen in a new light. For each enormous steel mill which is erected in such a situation signifies a tremendous exploitation of the people; it means the bureaucratic choice of the forced development of heavy-goods industry as over against an improvement in the life of the people. Indeed, last year the Chinese Communists themselves allowed us a glimpse of the process.

In September, 1957, the New York *Times* reported on an article which appeared in *Study*, the ideological journal of the Chinese Communist Party. According to this piece, unemployment was becoming a problem because of the tremendous emphasis on heavy industry. There were 1,300,000 new workers entering the economy each year, but there were only about 400,000 new jobs because the new units employed many fewer workers.



The exploitation which Mao's program demands has been met—and necessarily so—by the massive resistance of the people. The only way to extract capital out of the backs of the workers and peasants is through force. The fate of the four-hundred million Chinese peasants demonstrates this generalization.

At the Eighth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, in 1956, Liu Chao-Chi announced the official interpretation of the Chinese reality:

"In 1949, the people under the leadership of our Party overthrew the reactionary power of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism and created the Peoples Republic of China. In the second half of last year (1955) and the first half of this year, the people under the leadership of our Party won a complete and decisive victory through the socialist organization of agriculture, home industry, capitalist industry and trade."

Behind this definition lies six years of turbulent and terrible history: above all, a six-year campaign aimed at crushing all the rights of the Chinese peasantry, at exploiting them in the interests of the Communist state.

At first, the Chinese Communists proceeded slowly toward the collectivization of agriculture, emphasizing "voluntary" cooperatives. Thus, on February 15, 1953, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party stated:

"On the basis of present economic conditions, the individual economic system of the peasants will necessarily continue to exist and expand for a long time to come. It is even necessary to permit the continued development of the economic system of the wealthy peasant. Moreover, the Common Program states that the peasants' ownership of land will be safeguarded wherever the agrarian reform is carried on."

This program, more propaganda than reality, lulled many outside of China into believing that the "Chinese way" was different than the "Russian way," that it was more humane and reasonable. But just three years after this promise to continue the economic power of even the wealthy peasant, the bureaucracy undertook the greatest campaign of forced collectivization in the history of man, one which proceeded at a much greater speed than the Russian program of the late twenties and early thirties. Why?

### Communist Opposition

The answer lies in the reaction of the great mass of the peasantry to the initial government policy of moderate collectivization. It took the form, above all, of deserting the countryside, a "blind rush" to the cities. On March 15, 1954, for example, the *People's Daily* of Peiping reported, "In some regions, the blind flow of peasants to the towns has continued undiminished. In several places, the position has even become very serious." Other reports told of hoarding, the destruction of crops, and the slaughter of animals. In July, 1955, Mao Tse-Tung responded by putting forward the most rapid and far-reaching program of collectivization in history.

There was strong opposition *within* the Communist party to the new line. Mao Tse-Tung himself complained: "Certain comrades do not approve of the attitude adopted by the Central Committee towards the necessary relationship between the progress of the co-

operative organization of agriculture in our country and the program of socialist industrialization in our country." Indeed, preceeding and immediately following Mao's announcement of the new program there were a series of purges.

During the Hu Feng purge in 1955, the *People's Daily* noted that "The great majority of our revolutionary ranks (over 90 per cent) are good people. Only a very small number are covert counter-revolutionaries and bad characters." If half of the 10 per cent who were not "good" were counter-revolutionaries, this would mean that the Party had 450,000 opponents within its ranks. This is cited, not for the value of the figures themselves, but to indicate the turbulence which preceeded Mao's order on collectivization.

### Peasant Resistance

But if the peasants were responding to the relatively cautious attempts at collectivization by a "blind rush" to the city, if there was considerable opposition to collectivization in the party itself, why then did Mao adopt the new policy? Here, once again, we return to the fundamental mechanism of Chinese society: the determination to build up heavy industry at all costs. Mao made the point specific in his speech. "... everyone knows that in our country the production of *marketable grain* and of raw materials is at present at a very low level, while the country's needs in this respect are increasing every year." The agreement between China and Russia which was made in October, 1954, was not an altruistic transaction. The Russians were demanding payment. The Chinese peasant, through Mao's collectivization policy, was to foot the bill.

According to official Government figures (announced in Liu Chao-Chi's report at the Eighth Party Congress) 91.7 per cent of the Chinese peasantry was collectivized in the course of a little over a year! Nearly four-hundred million human beings had their lives changed through Mao's decree! The Chinese collectives are not as tightly controlled as the Russian, but this is not because of any great humanitarianism on Mao's part. The Chinese lack the mechanization for large-scale collective production, and necessarily their farming units are organized more loosely. Still, the collectivization program made enormous inroads upon private peasant property; indeed, it all but destroyed it.

We would know, without any specific facts at hand, that such a policy would call forth the resistance of the peasantry. The peasant, as a social fact in this world, clings tenaciously to his plot of ground even when it scarcely yields a living. Nowhere in history has the peasant ever surrendered his land without a violent struggle. But then, we do not have to rely on even this absolutely unimpeachable kind of conjecture. As Edgar Snow, a writer quite sympathetic to the Mao regime, pointed out in the October, 1957, *Monthly Review*, there is documentation from Communist sources on the resistance to the collectivization policy.

In August, 1957, a report of the New China News Agency (a Communist mouthpiece) was summarized by

the *New York Times*. It was found that there had been an enormous influx into the cities, and that 60 per cent of the urban population were engaged in "non-productive work." (A sidelight on "People's" China: 10 per cent of the urban population were reported to be employed as . . . domestics!) As a result of this phenomenon, the State Council had provided for "labor reform" of those who had come to the cities—i.e., for compulsory labor. In Shanghai, 550,000 peasants were "mobilized" and sent back to the countryside in a six-month period during 1955.

These facts cannot be hidden, because they express themselves in production statistics. Consequently the *People's Daily* on September 22, 1957, was forced to discuss the prospects for a bad harvest because of opposition from the peasants on the collectives. "Some members have thrown crops here and there," the article stated, "and others, while collecting crops, have made them their own." These are, of course, classic arts of peasant resistance to the state; they echo the Russian experience. And just as Russia today has failed still to solve its agricultural crisis (production levels in some areas, according to Kremlin admissions, are at Czarist levels), the Chinese regime will face this opposition in the future.

The apologists and defenders of Mao's regime argue that all this human suffering is a necessary temporary sacrifice made by the present so that the future will have a decent life. Let us examine this point of view on its own grounds, for it teaches us an important lesson about *this kind of mortgaging of the present for some promised future.*

### The New Class

Mao and the Chinese Communists have determined upon a policy of forced industrialization. They can only accomplish this—since their Russian "socialist" friends demand cash, or at least grain, on the barrelhead—by squeezing the surplus out of the people. And that, in turn, can only be accomplished by building a police state. This totalitarian state, inevitably arising as the necessary mechanism for exploiting the workers and peasants, becomes the basis of a new social class. The misery of industrialization and the extraction of capital is not uniform; the bureaucrats, of course, taste the joys of "socialism" almost at once. The disparity between bureaucrat and people is not yet so great as in Russia, but it is growing. A leading Indian socialist, B. Shastri, discovered in 1953 that workers were paid 50-60 wage units per month, while the factory manager received 2,750 wage units. And the New China News Agency admitted in 1954 that the per-capita consumption of cloth during 1953 was 94.19 feet for "cadres of municipal organs," 64.8 feet for workers, and 10-20 feet for peasants.

China is changing, yes. But the price of change is a terrible exploitation of the workers and peasants; the mechanism of the change (which is inseparable from it) is a totalitarian state; and the direction of the change is not toward socialism, but rather toward a new form of class society, more dynamic by far than the corrupt

regime of Chiang, more efficient by far in its oppression of the great mass of the Chinese.

Given this analysis, it is possible to understand the events of the recent year—from Mao's now famous speech, "On Contradictions Among the People," which was widely regarded as heralding a new era of reform, to the violent attack on all criticism which was unleashed a few months later.

Immediately before and after Mao's speech on February 27, 1957, there were reports in the Chinese Communist press of unrest among the people. On January 21, 1957, the *People's Daily* revealed working-class opposition—in the coal mines, in particular, there was absenteeism, violence against state functionaries, and the like. Things were so bad by May 13, 1957 (some two months after Mao "affirmed" the right to strike in certain situations), that "The masses and employees of a number of enterprises recently submitted petitions and even went on strike" (*People's Daily*). And the peasants, as noted before, continued their "blind rush" to the cities.

This is the context in which we must place Mao's speech: as a response to the opposition of the people—and to forces in the Party itself. At the very moment of the victory of "socialism" (according to Liu Chao-Chu's formula) ". . . some people have stirred up a miniature typhoon. They are complaining that co-operative farming will not do, that it has no superior qualities." These people were saying what the regime was to admit by mid-summer: that the peasants were not submitting to exploitation peacefully. But more than that, the Hungarian Revolution had become a danger. "Certain people in our country," said Mao, "were delighted when the Hungarian events took place. They hoped that something similar would happen in China."

Mao responded to the pressure by attempting to mollify it, by retreating in the face of it. He announced his theory of "non-antagonistic" contradictions, which was a euphemism for the violent class struggle of the workers and peasants against the Party. He also spoke of the need for criticism, re-emphasizing the slogan of "let a hundred flowers bloom." Thus, after the radical turn of July, 1955, the resistance of the people had won a victory. Mao was forced to make cautious concessions.

But then Mao immediately faced the unsolvable dilemma of totalitarianism. To answer popular pressure by concessions is to court . . . more popular pressure; to answer it by repression is to court . . . more popular pressure. Mao chose the first way. Immediately the people began to exploit the break in the monolithic front of the state power. There were student demonstrations led by young Communists (three of whom were later executed); there was the beginning of criticism. In *France-Observateur* Francis Fejto noted that the correspondent for the Hungarian Communist journal *Nepszabadsag* reported "with a sort of malign pleasure (in the issue of June 14) that the atmosphere of the discussion meetings resembled that in Poland and Hungary a year before, after the Twentieth Party Congress of the Russian Communist Party."

If the previous situation of mass opposition was im-



possible, so was this "solution." And so it was that almost immediately the promise of "liberalization" was turned into a virulent campaign against the "rightists"—i.e., against all free speech. Mao "revised" his remarks of February, 1957. In all probability, he added his famous six conditions, the prerequisites for "letting a hundred flowers bloom." Free speech was to be allowed if (1) it united the people; (2) was beneficial to "Socialist transformation"; (3) helps to consolidate the "people's dictatorship"; (4) helps to consolidate "democratic centralism"; (5) tends to strengthen the "leadership of the Communist Party"; (6) it was beneficial to "international socialist solidarity." Free speech, in short, was fine as long as it conformed to the Party line in every detail.

A further fruit of the "liberalization" (which Isaac Deutscher greeted in the *New Statesman* as a "radical repudiation of Stalinism") was legislation passed by the State Council on April 1, 1957, setting up a program for "education through labor." It was directed toward vagrants and minor political offenders (for the major offenders, Mao has slave labor). It allowed administrative bodies to assign such persons to work, to keep them there indefinitely, and to attach whatever wages they were paid for the support of their families. The law was rightly characterized by the International Commission Against Concentration Camp Practices (a democratic and socialist group in France which has protested terror in Algeria, Spain, and Russia, as well as in China) as "new concentration-camp legislation."

But that was not all. In their hasty retreat from even the promise of "liberalization," the Chinese Communists discovered a cherished ideological weapon invented by Joseph Stalin. On September 18, 1957, the *People's Daily* announced that socialism was triumphant, the bourgeoisie represented only a minority of the population, that, simultaneously, there was a "ferocious offensive from the right." This is, of course, the Chinese version of Stalin's theory that the more "socialism" triumphs, the more the class struggle sharpens because the reduced bourgeois elements become ferocious. (It is somewhat akin to the J. Edgar Hoover theory that the Communist Party became, in 1957, all the more dangerous because it lost half of its membership.) And, indeed, this theory plays a role in China similar to the one that it played in Russia: it is a means, not for winning socialism, but for consolidating the power of a new ruling class.

Thus, the key to Chinese Communist politics in 1957 is not to be found in the theories or the speeches: it resides in the growing hostility and opposition of the masses. Those who are beguiled by Mao's literary style (which is certainly softer than that ponderous Socratic dialogue which Stalin carried on with himself) are in for a rude awakening. As an anti-working-class, anti-peasant force Chinese Communism can only maneuver against the people, and that is the substance of its politics. It can turn to "liberalization" (Mao's February speech—or the "Kirov" period in Russia in the early thirties), but then it risks the growing pressure of the masses and is followed by a new hardening (Mao's re-

cent campaign—or the Russian purges which followed the "Kirov" period).

Given this analysis we can assess the social meaning of the fact that China is changing. On the one hand, the direction of the change is toward the creation of a new ruling class with all the power of a totalitarian state—which means that the struggle of the Chinese people, of the workers and peasants, for bread and freedom will always have to be carried out against the armed might of a police state. It means that any ultimate kind of transformation of China into a democratic socialist nation must proceed along the road of the most bitter, costly, and intense class struggle. It is, of course, unquestionable that the sheer physical growth of industrial plant, exacted through the exploitation of the masses, will make possible a higher form of society in the future. But that is true of any industrial increase—of Hitler's autobahns as well as of Mao's steel mills—and the really crucial issue is, how is it achieved?

### On the People's Backs

We have seen the answer in Mao's China. Capital is accumulated through sweating it out of the backs of the people. In order to carry through this grim, inhuman "progress," the totalitarian state inevitably arises as a necessary mechanism. And the terrible tragedy is that this method of industrialization is not necessary. In the early days of capitalism, it could be argued that the only way mankind could move to a new and higher level of production was through fantastic exploitation. But today, the productive forces of the world are such that the colonial revolution—in China, or India for that matter—could reach a decent level of productivity without passing through this agony. What is missing is, of course, socialism, and not only socialism in China, but socialism in the West to provide the massive aid necessary to provide human beings with a human way of life.

All of this may seem ultimate, yet it is hard fact. The Russian people have suffered for decades in the name of some distant "future," and there is still widespread poverty alongside the huge plants which symbolize the power of the bureaucracy. In China, the contrast will be even sharper, for there the initial poverty is even more massive and all-pervasive than in the Russia of 1917. There may be those who are lulled by Mao's soft phrases, but we have seen their true meaning in the past year, in the transition from "let a hundred flowers bloom" to the campaign against the "rightists." There may be those who rejoice in every new statistic about steel production, but they can do so only by ignoring the agony of the workers and peasants who, unasked, are paying the price.

Those who do not see the reality behind the phrases are in for another disillusionment. It will be only a matter of time—and not as long as in the case of Russia, for the people are on the move—until there is a "revelation" like the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party or the shock of horror that comes from a Hungary-like event. Mao's China is totalitarian anti-socialism, that is the terrible actuality.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON





## No Down Payment?

*Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;  
And in the lowest deep a lower deep  
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,  
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.*

*Satan, in Paradise Lost*

A NUMBER OF FILMS have appeared in recent years (*The Desperate Hours*, starring Humphrey Bogart and Frederic March, is the prototype) in which a gang of convicts or hoodlums seizes possession of a suburban home for a brief reign of terror. Transparently, these films are projections of middle-class anxiety; they reveal a repressed fear of criminal elements on the part of a class which wants only to be left alone to enjoy the fruits of its prosperity. Anything which threatens this enjoyment, from juvenile delinquency to colonial revolution to hydrogen bomb, is regarded with hostility by the new middle class.

Distinctly superior in conception, because it locates the threat to middle-class security *within*, is a recent film called *No Down Payment*, starring Tony Randall, Joanne Woodward, Sheree North, and Cameron Mitchell. This film lays bare the pervasive culture-sickness which flourishes in suburbia, threatening to transform the bourgeois version of Paradise into a modern equivalent of Dante's Inferno.

The film opens with a magnificent shot of a highway cloverleaf: express highway, overpass, and ramp, symbolic of the automobile age and hence of the technological basis of suburban life. A young couple, followed by a furniture van, drives past one development after another, turning off eventually at "Sunrise Hills, a Better Place for Better Living." David and Jean are college graduates; they are young married America just starting out in life, with a future full of hope and promise.

The strategy of the film is to present suburbia in its superficially attractive aspect, and then to tear its animating *mythos* to shreds, by revealing with growing dramatic force the actual quality of its inner life. The first few sour notes are scarcely detectable amidst the swelling paean to Happiness. One Daddy catches hell from Mom and the kids for washing the car on Sunday morning when he ought to be in church. The kids are glued to their TV sets, and can scarcely be dragged away for lunch. Standardization and uniformity are hinted at: "Fifteen-hundred barbecues in this development and probably half of them are broiling steaks tonight." The economic note is sounded in casual conversation: "Nobody here is allowed to own a house they can afford." "I don't like being an organization man; I like to make my own decisions." The allusion to Whyte is no accident; much of his material on suburbia is appropriated by the makers of the film.

Quickly David and Jean meet the neighbors; indeed, there is no alternative, for the very architecture conspires to destroy privacy. Sliding glass panels and picture windows suggest transparency, a kind of shared nakedness, and on a deeper level, insubstantiality. Family identity breaks down: a child is disciplined by a neighbor, rather than his own mother; couples are at first difficult to unscramble; the constant sexual temptation becomes one of the main points of the film.

Three couples, in addition to David and Jean, provide dramatic focus, each represents a different aspect of the social conflicts which are tearing suburbia asunder. First we have Troy and Leola, who inject the issue of social class into the new "classless" suburbs. They are Tennessee hillbillies gone respectable, status-starved and precarious in their new middle-class existence. At once envious and resentful of David and Jean because of their

college degrees, they try desperately to convince themselves that they are "as good as anyone on the block." In a crisis, however, their real feelings are revealed: "We're dirt; common Tennessee dirt."

Related to his social insecurity is Troy's militant veteranism: "The worst day in my life was when I put on civilian clothes." It was his worst day because it reduced him in status from war-hero to gas-station manager: "You think it makes me feel like a man, washing cars and cleaning out toilets?" Civilian life has deprived Troy of his manhood by depriving him of the right to kill. He pins his hopes for the future on becoming Chief of Police in Sunrise Hills; back in uniform, so to speak, his authoritarian personality will find an acceptable social role. Meanwhile, he retreats to his war memories as an escape from present reality, including the "dumb broad" he has married.

Herm and Betty are the most "normal" of the four couples: "Honey, you and I are what the insurance statistics call average." They are representative of their generation: Herm was born when his family was on relief; his old man dug ditches for the WPA. No sooner did he get his first job than he was swept up in the draft. Now, as manager of a hardware store, he has "a good job, government bonds, life insurance, health insurance, and steak every night if I want." He is a member of the city council, and in general a pillar of the community. In every crisis of the film, he is there to be leaned on, solid, dependable. Until, that is, he is confronted by Iko.

Through Iko, a Japanese-American veteran, the film raises the issue of racial tension in modern America. Iko works for Herm; he is competent and popular. Politically, his role resembles that of Sidney Poitier in many a post-war movie: he is dignified but firm; he will not be put off; and because he is right, he forces a crisis upon white America. He insists that Herm help him to purchase a home in Sunrise Hills, which of course sells only to whites, and in the face of this demand, Herm is forced to confess his impotence.

Jerry and Isabelle carry most of the economic burden of the film. Jerry is a salesman on a used car lot, forever chasing the latest hot proposition (or customer). Beset by financial worries, he is on the verge of alcoholism. But always the bold front, the sharp deal, the quick killing. The scene in which he cons a customer into buying an expensive car with 38 per cent carrying charges is superb in its nauseating suavity. Nothing dishonest, you understand. Just pushing too hard.

Jerry voices the philosophy which lies at the heart of suburban corruption: "I believe in money and in livin' it up. What this country needs is easy credit. From now on I concentrate on customers who are flat broke." This is as close as the script comes to the title of the film, and its significance lies in the fact that, figuratively speaking, Jerry's loans are called in. His big deal falls through, as a symbolic warning to an over-extended economy and to a complacent generation living in a fool's paradise.

Jerry is thoroughly sick of himself. A failure in his own eyes, he indulges in delusions of grandeur which

become increasingly pathological. In a magnificent scene, he weaves financial and sexual fantasies into a vast fabric of unreality until his wife screams: "You'll never make a million—you're just another guy." In a frightening sequel, as his horrified wife stands helplessly by, he passes his neurosis along to his son, urging him to become a big, strong guy. Then everyone will say, "There goes Mikey Flagg, a big man in every way."

Having been introduced to the neighbors, we soon learn that all is not well with the two principals. Jean is a Dixie Dugan type: the all-American girl who is outwardly attractive, but as frigid as liquid helium. Vain and ambitious, she pushes David, who is a good electronics engineer, out of the lab into selling, where there is more money and greater chance for advancement. In this context, incidentally, the problem of automation is raised, for if he makes a certain sale, 500 men will lose their jobs.

Jean, in a word, is a castrating female, and her husband has all he can do to guard the family jewels. "I'm attractive," she remarks, "and I hang on to it." "You push it." "What if I do?" "If you're trying to scare me, I'm scared." The inevitable result of so happy a married life is David's lack of assurance in the masculine role. He is afraid that he will be unable to protect his pretty wife from the advances of other men, and he is even more afraid of the sexy Leola, who challenges his maleness from another direction. One of the funniest sequences in a movie which cannot exactly be described as a howling comedy is the party scene where David nervously guards his virginity with folded arms against the tipsy onslaughts of hillbilly sexuality.

It is time to stress the main strength of this film: its success in translating economic pressures convincingly into sexual terms. If the disease originates in the political-economy, its surface-symptoms are sexual in nature. One feels the economy impinging to break down under the strain. Every marriage is more or less in trouble, and the pre-adulterous behavior at suburban parties threatens constantly to explode into an ugly situation. The two interlocking levels of the film are underscored by the "Drivin' Rock," a rock-'n-roll tune which provides background music for the party scenes. The men and women of suburbia are driven relentlessly in both their economic and their sexual roles.

### Suburb Savagery

The latent violence and brutality which lies beneath the placid surface of suburban life erupts within this context. It has always been there, in the Indian war whoops of the TV programs, and in the trophies of death and plunder which adorn the walls of Troy's garage. But it takes a sequence of economic frustration and sexual aggression to bring it into the open.

Troy is prevented from becoming Chief of Police because he has no college degree, and he retaliates in a drunken rage by raping David's wife—the college girl, the respectable girl, the eminently untouchable. It is a perceptive mind indeed which notes the dialectical relationship between law and criminality by turning a



would-be police officer into his opposite. A fine touch is added when Herm's young daughter walks in upon the tragic aftermath. Jean is hysterical; the child's parents are in a panic; but the child, conditioned to scenes of violence by TV, calmly remarks, "I'm hungry."

Suddenly the film goes berserk. It has probed the spiritual malaise of post-war America to its suppurating core, but it flinches from lancing the abscess. An ending consistent with the overall tone of the film would be too stark, too bitter for the box-office traffic to bear. A miracle ending is conveniently supplied, so incredible that no intelligent person can take it seriously. From the fade-out ("Sunrise Hills—the *happy ending* to your house-hunting") it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the

scriptwriter has done a Bert Brecht, dishing up the conventional finale with tongue in cheek.

But while this thought may help to establish the writer's reputation as a skillful organization man, it does not save the film from esthetic disaster. One cannot in the theater build up an emotional tension without providing a satisfactory release; it has roughly the effect upon the audience of *coitus interruptus*. Nevertheless, as Kinsey so justly observes in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, a good deal of pleasure can be had short of perfection. With this reservation, we heartily recommend the film.

BOB BONE

## BOOKS IN REVIEW

Sidney Alexander, *Michelangelo, The Florentine*. Random House, New York, 1957. \$4.95.

The historical novel is perhaps the most difficult of all writing forms to master. There is the problem of historical accuracy without reducing the novel to non-fiction; there is the danger of merely cloaking modern characters in ancient garb; above all, there is the difficulty of recapturing the "feel" of the past social scene. And the subject of Sidney Alexander's novel, *Michelangelo, The Florentine*, is prone towards even another pitfall. That is, the psychological propensity—especially for an American—to turn the story of the mighty Renaissance heroes into a Spectacular.

Indeed, this novel is an ambitious work: "to give us the living presence of the man himself," to give us that gigantic genius of the Renaissance, Michaelangelo.

The author comes to his subject scholarly equipped. From the opening pages there is no doubt that he knows his Renaissance. And he puts that erudition to good use—the externals of medieval Italy, the Borgias and the artisans, are finely portrayed.

Further, the author is a master craftsman. In fact, Alexander's handling of mob violence—especially the massacre of Bartolomeo the Jewish outcast, and the burning of the monk Fra Girolamo—surpasses even Camus' ability to sustain emotional interest.

But unfortunately the novel does not escape all the pitfalls. Perhaps due to the heavy scholarship the historical aspect is just a little too heavily played upon and thus the character development suffers. In particular Michelangelo's depths are not sufficiently plumbed. Thus the completed synthesis between character and social roots—the mark of the truly great historical novel—is missed.

In one character, however, Alexander comes very close to fulfilling these specifications. That is Andrea. Not only is Andrea an interesting device to counter Michelangelo's artistic genius (being a beauty, a beauty lover, and a failure as an artist), but he brings us the Jewish Renaissance community, its theology, its ghetto-like divorcement from the society, its attempts at assimilation, its people. Alexander does a superb job (especially when dealing with theology) in handling this side aspect of his major theme.

In general, *Michelangelo, The Florentine* is a very good novel. For students of history as well as literature, it is one that should not be overlooked. And for anyone who wants to grasp the realities of the Renaissance it is a must.

Finally, it should be noted that this volume is the first of a projected trilogy (this one covering the first thirty years of Michelangelo's life). The chances are—if *Michelangelo, The Florentine* is any indication—that the next volume may well be a masterpiece.

M. S.

Daniel Bell, *Work and Its Discontents*. Beacon Press.

One of the most pervasive of our contemporary myths is that of the "happy worker" (to use Harvey Swados' phrase). To those who believe in it, the American economy is not only crisis proof—an attitude which has been having some difficulty lately—but it has abolished social classes. Indeed, they feel that it has accomplished that most ultimate of the objectives stated in the *Communist Manifesto*, that of abolishing the workingclass as a class.

This new volume by Daniel Bell should be required reading for all such myth-makers, besides belonging on the shelf of every American radical. For though Bell's discussion of work fits into a rather small book, it is a near classic summation of the actual reality.

Bell goes into the actual workings of the production line; he probes briefly but sharply into time-study and speed-up. In one sense, none of his material is startling since it has been readily accessible to the interested observer. But in another, the very compact character of the study, the terseness of analysis, makes for a very real impact far beyond that of a simple summation of known facts. There is no extended discussion of a way out, for that is not Bell's purpose. But here, in concise form, is the raw material which any student of contemporary society (or, to put it less academically, anyone concerned with humanity in an inhuman world) must master.

For me, the main point that I would emphasize in speculating about the data, in carrying Bell's analysis on into a consideration of larger issues, is the relation of work to the rest of society. A school of analysis has developed in the last decade or so which would compartmentalize the existence of the worker. The shop, it is admitted, is not the happiest of places. But then, increasing leisure time will counterbalance this evil. What these people do not realize is that the depersonalization of the assembly line, of time study and speed up, reaches into the very inner recesses of the workers involved. And those who are shocked because of the way leisure time is employed in this society would do well to consider Bell's account of what happens to a man during that dominant section of his waking hours, the time spent on the line.

This book appeared some time ago, and it is a shame that this notice is so late and so brief. Be that as it may, it is not too late to call the attention of our readers to a book which is, in its own way, a minor classic, a needed reevaluation of what should have been obvious for a long time.

M. H.



# The Secret Life of Grandma Moses!

## —the story of *CONFIDENTIAL*

. . . Instantaneous photographs and newspaper enterprise have invaded the sacred precincts of private life; and numerous mechanical devices threaten to make good the prediction that 'What is whispered in the closet shall be proclaimed from the housetops' . . . Gossip is no longer the resource of the idle and the vicious, but has become a trade, which is pursued with industry, as well as effrontery. . . . It belittles by inverting the relative importance of things, thus dwarfing the thoughts and aspirations of a people. When personal gossip attains the dignity of print, and crowds the space available for matters of real interest to the community, what wonder that the ignorant and thoughtless mistake its relative importance. . . . Triviality destroys at once robustness of thought and delicacy of feeling. No enthusiasm can flourish, no generous impulse can survive under its blighting influence. . . .

LOUIS D. BRANDEIS

SAMUEL D. WARREN

Harvard Law Review, December 15, 1890

WITH THE *Confidential* trial in California now but a pleasant summer memory of headlines for the editors of *Tabloidia, U.S.A.*, it seems time to reconsider the *Confidential* phenomenon from the perspective of contemporary American culture rather than from the more parochial legal viewpoint expressed best in the question, "Was it Maureen in Grauman's Chinese?" Other analysts, including Brandeis and Warren (whose words nevertheless sparkle with clairvoyance), have tended to skirt the major issue by use of the more obvious clichés like "pornographic," "sensationalistic," "inside-dopesterism," etc. However, a closer look indicates that *Confidential* and its genre are much more a part of Americana than most observers are willing to admit. Even as hopeful a critic of "American civilization" as Max Lerner has recently commented that all we need to do is to "examine a newsstand in any American city . . . and it will be hard to suppress a shiver of apprehension about the American future." Although some of us have grown more discriminating with our shivers of late, reserving them for ICBM, Sputniks, Thors and NSC's, we all have known the horror of being stranded at an air or rail terminal with nothing to read—except what's on sale!

Before going further it may help the less masochistically curious student of American culture to describe generally the magazine that "tells the facts and names the names," along with its ilk. (Of course it is assumed that the "highbrow" reader of "little magazines" has remained unscathed, uncontaminated, and in need of enlightenment.) *Confidential* is a multi-colored, standard-size periodical which is published bi-monthly. Born of the brainstorm of Bob Harrison, its publisher, who recognized its money-making potential in the success of Lait and Mortimers' "Confidential" books, *Confidential* is the pioneer and most prominent magazine of its type. It has been flanked sporadically by other sheets with titles

equally paranoid. They include *Dynamite, Uncensored, Top Secret, Suppressed, On the QT, Behind the Scenes, Inside Story, Hush-Hush, Exposed, Private Lives, Rave, The Lowdown, Dare, and Whisper*, the latter also a Harrison publication.

While circulation figures of the lesser members of the exposé clan are unavailable, *Confidential* itself enjoys the largest newsstand sale per issue in the nation, conservatively estimated at 3,000,000 copies. Each copy is read, again conservatively, by three Americans (witness any barber shop where hardly a customer misses it), thus giving it a total readership of at least nine million. Over a five-year period Harrison has been able to perform a grand coup in the magazine market while publishers of the even not-so-little publications could only bow their heads in resignation (or, occasionally ape *Confidential*); some, like *Colliers*, even dropped out of the running.

Harrison's secret of success? He'll tell the world: "Sex, liberal doses of it, inside information the dope on people." As has already been implied, this explanation, even when it comes from the source itself, misses the mark by some length, and the problem shall be scrutinized more thoroughly here. By examining in detail the content formula through which *Confidential* has achieved its sales success and by investigating a few of the catalytic agents in the dominant American mentality which have spurred its warm reception, we may be able to answer those questions which the journalistic platitudes have left unrefined.

Upon reading through a sizeable number of *Confidential* issues one is struck with the emergence of a series of stories, based upon a similar "angle." Of the several "angle" formulations which have been developed, three particular groupings stand out as being of major importance. They are (1) Bedroom 'race-relations' (2) Resentment of the American socio-sexual elite and (3) *Confidential* as "fearer-pursuer."

### Sex and Segregation

In a strange and somewhat startling manner *Confidential* has subtly injected its influence into the field of race relations. And while the matrix upon which it has based its exploitation of racial questions is admittedly a sexual one, it is exactly this dimension which many observers have considered the key psychological nerve in the anatomy of American racial tensions.

John Gunther, for instance, has described this phenomenon in *Inside U.S.A.*:

Segregation equals sex. Or perhaps one should say merely that sex is the basic reason for segregation. The strictures that forbid whites and Negroes to eat together, drink together, play together, talk together, are at bottom the result of white fear that such intimacies will lead to a breakdown of sexual barriers, and the involve-

ment of blacks with white women. . . . Many years ago visiting the United States, H. G. Wells reported the remark, "If you eat with them you've got to marry them." Indeed the issues are so distorted that, in the south almost anybody who takes a strong line against segregation is apt to be accused of advocating "mixed sexual relations."

In a telephone interview some time ago, A. P. Govoni, Managing Editor of *Confidential*, informed us that *Confidential's* "best stories," i.e., those most appealing to its readers, were those which involved sexual associations between Negroes and whites. Unsurprisingly, *Confidential* has averaged approximately one story per issue in which a Negro and white were linked as the principals in some amorous engagement. The general tone of these stories went something like this. Briefly, one report tells of how Marshall Field's daughter married an "ex-Pullman Car Porter." ("The attraction for each other was as plain as black and white, with a little long green thrown in.") Or, "What Makes Ava Gardner run for Sammy Davis Jr." ("Nor is he the first bronze boyfriend to rate high in the Gardner date book.") Another exposé tells of how Mae West "kept" Negro prize fighter Chalky Wright, "who came up to see Mae—stayed for a year." Or still another describes "Doris Duke and her African prince" who gave her "breathing lessons." The issue for September, 1957, tells of a Danish nobleman who underpaid a "play for pay girlie" who was alternately described as a "copper colored cutie," "sepia siren," "tan tootsie," "dusky damsel," "bronze babe" and "chocolate chick," *ad nauseum*. And *Confidential* hardly holds a monopoly on this type of story. For instance, the cover of the December issue of *Inside Story* is headlined "The Truth About Negro-White Marriages," while the latest issue of *Whisper* features an article in which Ricardo Montalban "Tells how it feels to kiss one of the most beautiful colored girls in the world."

### The Rape Complex

The attraction which is latently concealed in these overtly sexual disclosures is many sided. On the one hand exposés of inter-racial intimacies may serve as the fuel for racial hatred. For the knowledge that Negroes have had sexual relations with white women must necessarily infuriate the bigoted sufferers of what has been termed the "rape-complex." Haunted by the guilt of the history of the Southern rape of Negroes, the racist fears the sexual retribution of the mythically super-virile Negro male. *Confidential* presents the evidence which confirms his suspicions. When the situation is reversed and it is the white male who is linked with the Negro female, the mystical curiosity which surrounds miscegenation is aroused. The completion of this attraction-repulsion cycle which is attached to inter-racial sexual relations adds up to the most insidious "hidden persuader" yet devised.

For many Negroes these revelations have an equal attractiveness. As we know, color remains an important factor within the status and prestige structure of the American Negro community. Hair straighteners and skin lighteners are only a few of the symbols of the frequently practiced Negro equation of "white equals right." Projective tests of young Negro children have in fact borne

out the Negro's self-imposition of white values. Given a series of Negro and white dolls the children were asked to separate the good children from the bad. They consistently favored the white dolls as "good" and the Negro dolls as "bad." And it has been observed that often the Negro male takes pride in the lightness of his wife as a sign of achieved status. Therefore, it would seem to follow that by describing how prominent Negro males achieve successful sexual relationships with white women, the Negro reader is attracted by the vicarious status achievement he receives through his "culture heroes."

This is hardly to assert, of course, that consequently all Negroes or whites are attracted to *Confidential*, but it must be recognized that the tendencies do exist.

Another element, and in fact, perhaps the major factor accounting for *Confidential's* success, has been the manipulation of the state of mind which has been termed "ressentiment." Louis Coser has described this thought mode as follows:

Feelings of inter-class hostility typical in an open class system, as distinct from a caste system are often likely to turn into resentment. They do not indicate genuine rejection of the values or groups against which these negative feelings are directed, but rather a "sour grapes attitude:" that which is condemned is secretly craved.

### Sedate Pornography

By "exposing" deviant behavior in the lives of not only Hollywood heroes but, also of the financial, political and social elites, Harrison has been able to channel the resentment of a manifestly morally indignant public into his till. The American housewife, white collar employee, or factory worker finds his own obscure existence bearable, having been convinced once more that fame and fortune breed debauchery, and that those whose status has surpassed his own are depraved and immoral. *Confidential* documents once and for all that the leisure class "playboy" is "queer"; that the national pastime of the social registrants is adultery; and that you can't keep clean and be a movie queen. The status inferiority and discontent of the mass is channeled into moral superiority—through *Confidential's* efforts. For while on the one hand the mass mind finds itself titillated by the revelation, on the other, it is able to expiate the guilt of its unachieved social aspirations and desires through the condemnation of others.

It has of course been argued that the revelations of *Confidential* satisfy nothing more than a prurient national taste. However, one look at the contents of the ordinary pornographic fare which is peddled almost openly in America dispels the illusion that *Confidential* is lewd. In fact, by contrast it is almost sedate. After all, "sex in the raw" will never be replaced by "guilt by innuendo" in the pornography market. And, on the other hand, the escapades of some unknown "Miss Playboy" would hardly make filler in the pages of *Confidential*. Rather, for the "smear sheets" it is more a matter of the "who" in the story. The "what" is left to the reader's imagination.

*Confidential's* flimsy editorial pretense of respectability and moral self-righteousness reflects this attitude clearly. In the September issue in which Harrison states his



position concerning the trial, he says:

Hollywood is in the business of lying. Falsehood is its stock and trade. They use vast press agent organizations and advertising expenditures to "build up" their "stars." They "glamorize" and distribute detailed—and often deliberately false—information about private lives . . . The trouble with their "build-ups" is that they create a phony atmosphere which spoils some of those who are "built up." From Fatty Arbuckle to Bergman-Rossellini, Hollywood has had trouble with its "spoiled darlings" who have decided that the rules for "ordinary" mortals don't apply to them.

Some of these spoiled people became Communists to show how big, bad, bold, and unconventional they are. Others have flaunted their sexual depravity.

All we have done is "blow the whistle" on a few of these spoiled ones."

This last linkage of politics and sexual depravity in fact points to another facet of the American national character which *Confidential* has taken under its wing. It has latched on to what has been termed the "feared-pursuer" mentality which proved so successful a tactic for some time on the level of national politics. By joining in the search for "red homosexuals in the state department," *Confidential* has befriended that species of American who, feeling itself surrounded by enemies, is ready

to enroll in the nearest witch hunt. In stories like "How the Communists Tried to Gag Walter Winchell," "Social Security—the I.O.U. That May Never Be Paid," "The Truth About Sumner Welles" or "The Strange Death of J. Robert Oppenheimer's Red Sweetheart," *Confidential* has consistently revealed its kinship to the McCarthyesque mentality. In fact, it seems fair to conclude that while there has been a decline of persecutions and smear on the political level, neo-neanderthalism still haunts the cultural air in the spectre of *Confidential*.

It would, of course, be naive to consider *Confidential* a cause of the serious disorders from which our society suffers. At best it is but a scavenger feeding upon the malignancies which the body social endures. And therefore the attempt to stamp it out via the courts is only of consequence for those who are its victims, and for those of us concerned with the civil liberties issues that it raises.

However, if looked at from the angle of vision suggested here, *Confidential* can be viewed as the crystallization of tendencies which are by now deeply rooted in the American common consciousness.

JULES BERNSTEIN

## COMMUNICATIONS

### TO THE EDITOR:

Did your reviewer, George Post, read the same edition of Theodore Draper's book, *The Roots of American Communism*, that I read?

I will content myself with four glaring examples of incredible carelessness:

1. Post complains that "Draper fails to point up clearly" that "the American Party became particularly susceptible to the Communist International's intervention before the CI was Stalinized because the CI had been forced to intervene in the affairs of the American Party in an effort to bring it out of its absurd sectarianism."

Yet this is the sense of the last five chapters of Draper's book, and it is expressed most clearly in the last two pages. If Post knows so much now about what forced the C.I. to intervene in American affairs, it is because Draper has told him.

2. Post complains that "there is no mention of what was probably the greatest strike wave in American history" in 1919.

On page 197, there is an entire paragraph on the strike wave, naming the most important strikes throughout the nation.

3. Post complains that Draper tries too hard to show that John Reed "was breaking with the Communist Party before his early tragic death."

As Draper shows, there is an entire literature devoted to the proposi-

tion that Reed had broken completely before his death. Draper tries hard to show that the evidence for this point of view is contradictory. He seeks to establish a balance between the extremes of Reed the Communist martyr and Reed the anti-Communist martyr.

It is true that Reed did not live to see the "evils of Stalinism." Draper makes Reed see the evils of "Zinovievism." By substituting Stalinism for Zinovievism, Post hopelessly confuses the issue.

4. Post quotes approvingly Draper's quotation of some remarks by Zinoviev on infantile leftism "at the first meeting of the Comintern in 1919." On page 256 of my copy of the book, the same remarks are placed in the context of the second Congress of the Comintern in 1920.

A small point, no doubt, but perhaps a meaningful one in a review that betrays such hasty reading and even hastier writing.

Sincerely,

Roger Rosebank

R. Rosebank's letter concerning my review of Theodore Draper's *The Roots of American Communism* reveals an intimacy with the book which equals that of its author. And I must acknowledge that while I do not feel Rosebank has answered the intent of my arguments, he has pointed up the fact that my hastily written review left an impression of a more critical attitude

towards the book than I intended to convey.

While I do not agree with the points made by Mr. Rosebank in his first three specific examples, I cannot engage in meeting them here for that would require another full review of the Draper book. Therefore, I shall content myself with saying that Draper's volume is better than my review indicated. I am indebted to Theodore Draper, who having shared in the tragedy of the Communist movement, has been able to help all socialists examine and probe their political and moral past. The early Communist party has usually been looked upon favorably by many left-socialists, and even when most bitterly anti-Stalinist they have absorbed much from the experiences of that movement.

In fact, parts of the American socialist movement, long anti-Stalinist, are just now beginning to throw off much of the emotional and intellectual baggage accumulated during the early days of the CP. Consequently, I think that *The Roots of American Communism* is of major importance for American socialists in a period of reevaluation of many previously believed ideas. It was for this reason that I utilized my influence with the editor of ANVIL to have it included as one of the three volumes which ANVIL offered its readers at a special discount in the same issue containing my review.

Sincerely,

George Post



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